

Clinton probes cuts in Social Security

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

At a January 5 White House news conference, Democratic president William Clinton boasted that his budget proposal for 1999 "will be the first time in 30 years that we've had a balanced budget." While extolling this as "good news for the American people," Clinton continues to probe for ways to gut Social Security, Medicare, and other entitlements won through decades of struggle by working people.

Clinton warned against "using a projected future [budget] surplus as a pretext for returning to the failed policies of the past." In other words, the president assured the U.S. rulers that when he presents his fiscal program to Congress February 2, he will not retreat on previous cuts in social entitlements implemented under the guise of achieving a "balanced budget."

In 1996 Clinton signed the Welfare Reform Act, which eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children. That measure hacked off a piece of the 1935 Social Security Act, affecting most of the 13 million workers and farmers receiving welfare and the 25 million people receiving food stamps. Under the 1997 "balanced budget" law, some 500,000 disabled immigrants with legal documents were restored their benefits — they were among the initial 1 million immigrants scheduled to be kicked off the food stamp program.

The day after his press conference,
Continued on Page 10

London steps up patrols in N. Ireland

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Leading up to the January 30 demonstration that will take place in Derry, Northern Ireland, to commemorate the 1972 massacre of Irish civil rights marchers by British troops, London announced that the British Army would resume daytime foot patrols on the streets of Belfast. The pro-British Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police force is also stepping up its activity in nationalist areas throughout Northern Ireland.

The pretext for these moves is a series of killings that began with the December 27 shooting of Billy Wright, the leader of the right-wing paramilitary Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF), in Long Kesh prison (also known by London as the Maze prison) near Belfast. In the following week, Loyalist (pro-British) terrorists shot up two pubs in predominately Catholic areas, killing two men and wounding several others.

Sinn Fein, the leading party fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland, has called for not allowing these provocations to derail the all-party talks on the future of Ireland that are currently under way. "The Loyalists are doing what they always do
Continued on Page 10

France: workers occupy unemployment offices

3,000 march in Paris for jobs, gov't relief

BY DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS — Three thousand people marched here January 7 demanding government relief for unemployed workers. Some of the demonstrators carried signs reading "Jobs!" The protest took place outside a meeting of the board of directors of Unedic, the national unemployment insurance agency.

Workers have been occupying 26 unemployment offices throughout France with the protests spreading rapidly. Eight new offices were occupied on January 6 alone.

French television reported that the authorities had closed another 44 of the 636 offices nationwide to prevent demonstrators from taking them over. The protests have been spearheaded by several organizations in support of the unemployed, including Act Together Against Unemployment! (AC!), and by the General Confederation of Labor (CGT).

Ambroise Boulanger, 28, an unemployed restaurant worker and AC! activist, remarked, "Yesterday I was part of an occupation of an unemployment office in the 10th district of Paris, when we were expelled by the military. In a place that's supposed to help the unemployed, they send in the military!"

Workers occupied unemployment
Continued on Page 12



Reuters/Charles Platiau

Thousands of jobless workers march in Paris January 7 demanding better unemployment compensation and that the social democratic government of Lionel Jospin make good on its promises to create more jobs. Unemployment in France stands at 12.4 percent.

'What will it take to win? Determination': Maple Leaf strikers reach out for support

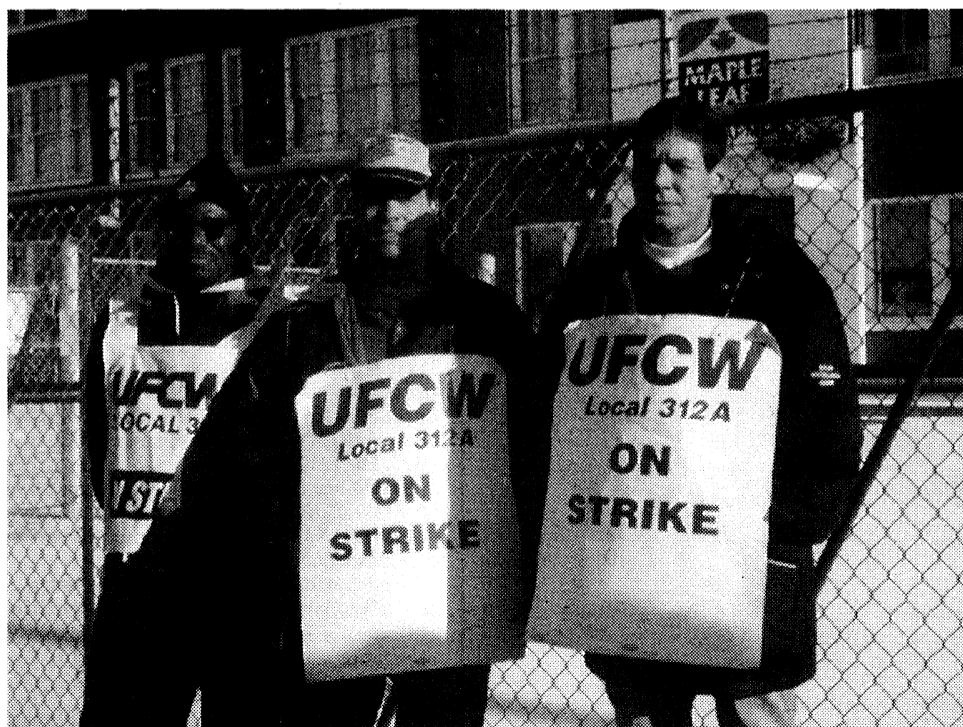
BY MICK McDONALD

BURLINGTON, Ontario — "What will it take to win? It will take determination. We expect scabs in the new year. It's going to take a mobilization of workers and unions to stop it." This was how Brian Defreitas, a

butcher for six years at Maple Leaf Foods, explained the importance of winning support for the strike from other working people. Defreitas is one of the 900 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) who have been on strike

here against Maple Leaf Foods meatpacking plant since November 15. The company is demanding cuts in pay and benefits of up to Can\$9 (Can\$1=US\$0.70) an hour.

Maple Leaf is also proposing that, if the strikers sign an agreement, everyone restart
Continued on Page 11



Militant

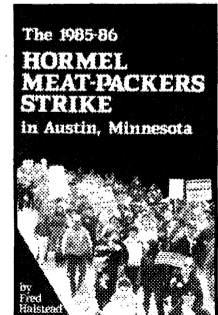
UFCW members at picket line against Maple Leaf in Edmonton, Alberta. The strikers are battling the meatpacking bosses' assaults on their wages and working conditions.

from Pathfinder

The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota

Fred Halstead

The fight against intensifying speed-up, unmatched brutalization, and second- and third-round wage cuts demanded by the meat-packing bosses. \$3.50



Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690.

Brazilian inmates end standoff

A prison standoff ended December 30 at the Sorocaba Detention Center, 50 miles west of São Paulo, Brazil, when government officials agreed to transfer 20 inmates to the other prison in the state. The rebellion was sparked when 15 inmates, reportedly dressed in women's clothing, tried to escape but were recognized by guards. The prison guards then killed one prisoner and an inmate's wife. The prisoners then seized more than 600 hostages — including 17 guards and hundreds of visiting relatives — on December 28.

"Prison uprisings in Brazil are common because of massive overcrowding and because inmates often have to wait years for a trial," the Associated Press reported. Some 900 inmates are crammed in the Sorocaba penal facility, which has the capacity for 500 people. Seven of the eight prison rebellions that exploded in Brazil in the last week of 1997 occurred in São Paulo state.

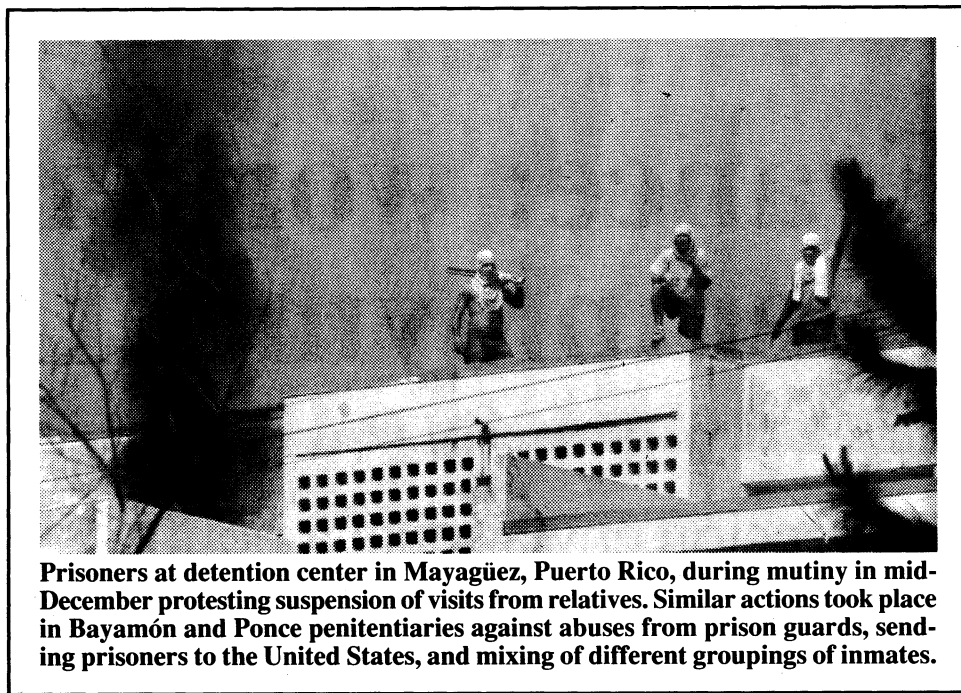
CIA to train Mexican military

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has launched a training program with the Mexican army to establish a "network of antidrug troops" around the country. Some 3,000 Mexican soldiers in the "Air Mobile Special Forces Groups" are expected to participate in the U.S. defense department training courses by the autumn of 1998. Clinton administration officials say the training activities include air-assault operations and military policing. The Pentagon has given the Mexican government 73 UH-1H helicopters, which supposedly may only be used for "antidrug operations."

U.S. and Mexican military officials acknowledge that the elite units could be deployed against the guerrilla forces and peasants in the southern states of Chiapas and Guerrero. A CIA-trained Mexican Army strike force was disbanded in the late 1980s after several Mexican civilians were killed in raids.

Venezuela gov't plans cutbacks

The Venezuelan government has announced plans to slash \$2.1 billion from its 1998 budget and reduce the country's inflation rate from 38 percent to 20-25 percent.



Prisoners at detention center in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, during mutiny in mid-December protesting suspension of visits from relatives. Similar actions took place in Bayamón and Ponce penitentiaries against abuses from prison guards, sending prisoners to the United States, and mixing of different groupings of inmates.

The budget proposals preceded renewed negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) scheduled for January, and are in effect a counter-offer to IMF demands to raise gas prices to reduce the government's budget deficit. The regime recently sold the last state-owned steel plant in Latin America to private investors from Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela.

Bishop can't fill cruise to Cuba

Miami Archbishop John Favalora canceled a Miami-to-Cuba cruise ship scheduled for the visit of Pope John Paul II to the island January 21-25. Only 400 spaces on the ship had been sold. The cancellation came after weeks of debate within the Cuban-American right wing and more broadly in Miami, as well as pressure from rightist Cuban-American businessmen, political figures, and big church fund-raisers who were opposed to the trip. The Archdiocese of Miami is now looking into possibilities of air charters to Cuba for the papal visit.

Fewer Czechs support NATO

Support for the expansion of the NATO into the Czech Republic has dwindled

among citizens there — from 50 percent in the spring of 1997 to 43 percent in December. Irritated with the "lethargic attitude" in the Czech ministry of defense, Clinton administration officials chided the Czech government to "sharpen its preparation for membership" into the north Atlantic military alliance, the *New York Times* reported.

Bowing to Washington's dictates, the Czech government hiked military spending this fall, and Vaclav Havel was forced to resign as prime minister November 30. Havel, who pressed austerity measures and other capitalist "reforms," resigned in the aftermath of a currency crisis as the economy plunged into a deep slump.

Italian gov't: 'We don't want Kurdish refugees from Turkey'

Amid claims that 10,000 Kurdish immigrants are fleeing to Italy to escape repression from the Turkish government's stepped-up military drive against Kurdish rebels, Italy's prime minister Romano Prodi called for a "common European policy" to deal with the situation January 4. Giorgio Napolitano, Italy's interior minister, granted many of the Kurdish immigrants political asylum January 3-4, but urged the Turkish government to "work seriously" against Kurdish emigration from that country. Ankara has demanded that Rome repatriate the Kurdish refugees.

A Turkish ship carrying 825 Kurds ran aground December 26 off the southern coast of Italy, and officials in Rome said that a second vessel was en route across the Mediterranean Sea.

Meanwhile, the Turkish government announced December 29 that its military had wrapped up a recent operation against guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers' Party.

Iran opens pipeline, defies U.S.

The Iranian government opened a 125-mile natural gas pipeline December 29 that

gives the country access to the world's largest untapped energy reserves. The \$190 million project will transport some 12 billion cubic feet of natural gas a year from the Caspian Sea Basin through a desert field in Turkmenistan into Iran.

Tehran's deal with the Turkmenistan government weakened Washington's efforts to isolate Iran. These attempts include the 1996 Iran-Libya Sanctions Act mandating U.S. sanctions on any enterprise investing more than \$20 million in Iran or \$40 million in Libya. "The United States opposes as a matter of policy the construction of pipelines across Iran," declared James Foley, deputy spokesperson for the U.S. State Department at a December 29 press conference responding to the gas pact.

White farmers appeal land buyout in Zimbabwe

White farmers in Zimbabwe submitted final appeals December 28 to halt the compulsory purchase of their land by the government under its land reform program. On November 28 President Robert Mugabe published a list of 1,500 mostly white-owned farms to be confiscated under the program. The government announced it will forcibly buy 13.7 million acres — half the country's prime commercial farmland — to be redistributed to landless Black peasants. Almost half the country's farmland is owned by some 4,400 white farmers, while 8 million peasants are packed into one-third.

Since 1980 when Zimbabwe ended white-rule and won independence from Britain, the government has bought 8.3 million acres of land from white farmers. Last October Mugabe approached British prime minister Anthony Blair to request compensation for the white farmers but was turned down. According to Mugabe, Washington agreed during negotiations in 1979 that it would help London pay for land redistribution. An official at the U.S. embassy in Harare claimed there was "no foundation" to Mugabe's statement.

Suit filed for school vouchers

Joseph Rogers, a conservative Black attorney, filed a class-action lawsuit against the Denver school system demanding publicly financed vouchers to send children to private and parochial schools. Rogers initiated the legal action two years after the busing program ended in Denver and organized some 3,500 plaintiffs from Black and Latino working-class communities.

The U.S. rulers are chipping away at public school systems; deepening the attack on busing programs throughout the country as many public schools are becoming resegregated. Proposals for voucher programs, which undermine support for public schools, are being considered in about 25 states.

— BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Janet Post, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Miami, contributed to this column.

THE MILITANT

Class struggle in South Africa

Workers and farmers in South Africa continue to fight to advance the democratic revolution there against the legacy of the racist apartheid system. The 'Militant' follows the class struggle in South Africa. Don't miss a single issue!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

RENEWAL

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A15 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$12 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • Belgium, 375 BF • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,500 • New Zealand, NZ\$15 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 62/No. 2
Closing news date: January 8, 1998

Editor: NAOMI CRAINE
Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS
Editorial Staff: Megan Arney, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Argriss Malapanis, Brian Taylor, and Maurice Williams.
Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the *Militant* (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The *Militant* can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311.2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant
Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

The *Militant* can be accessed on the internet at: gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org/11/pubs/militant
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The *Militant* Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year sub-

scription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. **Asia:** send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to *Militant*, 4581 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2L4.

Britain, Ireland: £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to *Militant* Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. **Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East:** £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to *Militant* Distribution at above address. **France:** Send FF300 for one-year subscription to *Militant*, MBE 201, 208, rue de la Convention, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U. **Belgium:** BF 1,900 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. **Iceland:** Send 5,400 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to *Militant*, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavík. **Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:** 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to *Militant* Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. **New Zealand:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Mandela evaluates steps to advance S. African revolution

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — "The principal result of our revolution, the displacement of the apartheid political order by a democratic system, has become an established fact of South African society." With these words, outgoing president of the African National Congress Nelson Mandela opened the ANC's 50th national conference on December 16 in Mafikeng.

However, Mandela warned, "because we have just begun, the process of fundamental social transformation has not yet impacted seriously on the apartheid paradigm which affects all aspects of our lives."

Mandela's political report — five hours in duration, accompanied by several breaks — was presented on behalf of the outgoing leadership to the 3,046 voting delegates in attendance, along with hundreds of observers and fraternal delegates from South Africa and abroad. It was broadcast live on national television. The report presented both an evaluation of the current conjuncture and a balance sheet of the ANC's experience as the ruling party in South Africa, three and a half years after it won a majority of votes in the country's first non-racial elections. Those elections registered the gains of the revolutionary democratic mass movement of the South African toilers in the battle to overturn apartheid.

Forces of counterrevolution

Summarizing the democratic measures put in place by the ANC government, including the adoption of a new constitution last year, Mandela said this did not mean that "antidemocratic forces of counterrevolution no longer exist in our society. Indeed, one of the reasons why we have not seen these forces raise their ugly head more forcefully, has been the fact that our program of reconstruction and development is at its early stages.... Accordingly, during the last three years, the opponents of fundamental change have sought to separate the goal of national reconciliation from the critical objective of social transformation. In many instances, they have sought to set these one against the other, with a view to the elevation of the first of these aims to a position of hegemony, with national reconciliation defined as being characterized by such measures as would compensate the white minority for the loss of its monopoly of political power by guaranteeing its privileged positions in the socioeconomic sphere." The outgoing ANC president, who remains president of the country until the 1999 elections, cited in particular efforts to obstruct affirmative action and resistance within the public service to its transformation into a nonracial institution.

Mandela said that a counterrevolutionary network, based in part on the old public administration, is seeking to weaken the ANC, use crime to render the country ungovernable, undermine the economy, and erode confidence at home and abroad in the capacity to carry out a program of reconstruction and development. "Their task," he said, "is to spread messages about an impending economic collapse, escalating corruption in the public service, rampant and uncontrollable crime, a massive loss of skills through white emigration, and mass demoralization among the people either because they are white and therefore threatened by the ANC and its policies which favor black people, or because they are black and consequently forgotten because the ANC is too busy protecting white privilege."

Role of ANC's opponents

Mandela stated that the "white parties" — chiefly the National Party, Democratic Party, and the Freedom Front — "have essentially decided against the pursuit of a national agenda. Rather, they have chosen to propagate a reactionary, dangerous and opportunist position which argues that: a normal and stable democracy has been achieved; the apartheid system is a thing of the past; their legitimate responsibility is to oppose us as the majority party... so that they may gain power after the next elections." Mandela added that these parties continue to raise the specter of a "swart gevaar," Afrikaans for "black danger."

"Among the Coloureds and Indians, the view that the nonracial democracy consti-

tutes a threat would be the most prevalent among the working class and the lower middle class, who would be the first to feel the pressure of African competition in the context of a deracialized labor market. It is among these sectors of the population that we find the greatest fear of the impact of our policy of affirmative action," Mandela said. He called for increased political work in these sections of the population, along with expanded efforts "among the whites in general and the Afrikaner population in particular."

For the first time, a representative of the Inkatha Freedom Party attended an ANC conference. Mandela welcomed him, saying that "our two organizations are involved in a joint effort to consolidate peace in the country and to encourage a culture of tolerance and nonviolent political competition.... Furthermore, we share the same constituency, especially the rural poor." Political violence has sharply declined nationwide, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal province, where Inkatha holds a majority in the provincial legislature. The report attacked the role of the media, which despite some cosmetic changes remains overwhelmingly in the hands of white capitalists. "The media uses the democratic order, brought about by the enormous sacrifices of our own people, as an instrument to protect the legacy of racism, graphically described by its own patterns of ownership, editorial control, value system and advertiser influence," Mandela stated.

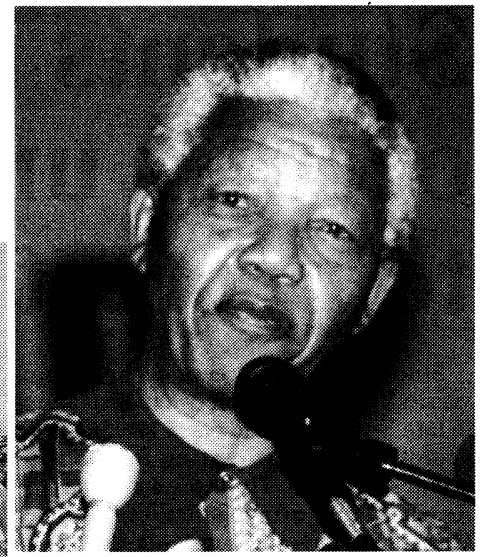
Much of the press denounced the speech as "anti-white"; many journalists gave the impression of being stunned after the ANC leader's report.

"Mandela is naive if he thinks whites will voluntarily take a drop in their living standards to uplift the poor — the economic divisions left by apartheid can be tackled in a meaningful way only if the state creates an appropriate economic environment," ran the lead editorial in the December 17 *Business Day*, which labeled the report "white-baiting." The liberal *Mail Guardian*, in its December 19 editorial, called the speech "bizarre," and claimed it employed "the language of paranoia, reliant on innuendo, which can only lead to social division."

Economy and pace of change

The ANC government has taken initial steps to provide adequate water, electricity, housing, free medical care, education, and other basic needs to the millions of blacks in urban townships and rural areas denied these under apartheid. Such programs, all in their infancy, are hindered, Mandela said, by both the need for fiscal discipline and the existence of the old state machinery. "One of the central tasks of the democratic revolution is the abolition of the apartheid state and its replacement by a democratic state. A complicating factor is that we must accomplish this task at the same time as we continue to use the existing state machinery to implement our programs." Mandela said that private capital must understand that perpetuation of apartheid patterns of economic ownership "constitutes a recipe for an enormous social and political explosion." Citing quotes by Swedish government minister Pierre Schorri and capitalists George Soros and David Rockefeller, all of which expressed concern over the threat of class confrontations arising from "globalization," Mandela urged acceptance of the proposal that "capital might be owned privately, yet there must be an institutionalized system of social accountability for the owners of capital." These remarks echoed those contained in one of the chief pre-conference discussion documents, the Strategy and Tactics document. It states, in part: "We seek to create a social order in which the many positive elements of the market dovetail with the obligations of citizens one to the other.... In this sense, such a society is neither a clone of an idealistic capitalist order which is hostage to rampant so-called market forces, nor an egalitarian utopia of mechanical social parity."

Turning to the organization question, Mandela addressed "a number of negative features within the ANC and the broad democratic movement [that] have emerged during the last three years." He cited "the emergence of careerism within our ranks.



Militant /Top: Greg McCartan, Left: T.J. Figueroa

African National Congress president Nelson Mandela, shown above in 1994, opened the ANC's 50th national conference December 16. Left, mineworkers in South Africa rally May 27, 1996. Protesters hold up signs demanding affordable housing.

portance of vigorously contesting the 1999 national elections. He summed up by stating, "Our experience of the last three years tells us that the

demobilization of the formations of the broad democratic movement as well as the people themselves, spells defeat for our revolutionary offensive.... It will become even clearer in the period ahead of us as we further deepen the process of fundamental social transformation, as we must."

Leadership election

Delegates elected a new National Executive Committee, along with six new national office-bearers. Elected unopposed were Thabo Mbeki, ANC president; Jacob Zuma, deputy president; Kgalema Motlanthe, secretary-general; and Mendi Msimang, treasurer-general. In contested posts, Patrick Lekota was elected chairman, and Thenjiwe Mthintso deputy secretary-general. Nelson Mandela, who had earlier announced his intent to retire from formal leadership in the ANC, declined a nomination made from the floor to the NEC. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, president of the ANC Women's League, failed in her projected bid for the ANC deputy presidency. She could not muster enough votes from the floor for nomination — only 127 of the 3,046 delegates supported her — and she subsequently declined. She was elected to the NEC. Madikizela-Mandela drew renewed attention during a recent hearing before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that examined her role in abuses committed in Soweto during the late 1980s. Dozens of witnesses charged Madikizela-Mandela with involvement in killings and beatings; she denied all of these allegations. Newspapers, television, and radio news gave blanket coverage to the hearings, presenting the actions she accused of as on par with the crimes of the apartheid regime. Truth Commission hearings held during the same time period dealing with the 1993 murder of ANC and Communist Party leader Chris Hani were barely covered.

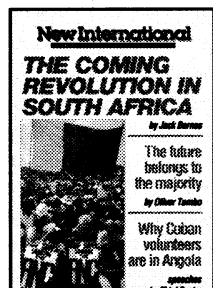
"The fundamental social transformation of our country cannot happen without the people who understand and are committed to bringing this transformation about. In other words, to discharge the revolutionary tasks ahead of us, we need battalions of revolutionaries who are as ready to serve the people as have been the generations of cadres that preceded them."

Mandela also initiated conference discussion on differences that have emerged in the organization's alliance with the Congress of South African Trade Unions and South African Communist Party. He elaborated on the proliferating phenomenon of so-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs), many of which, he warned, masquerade as "progressive" organizations, but have no mass base and draw funds from the South African or foreign governments. Mandela said an important weakness in the ANC's international work, which needs rectification, is the fact that it has "failed to sustain the level of contact and interaction with other political formations which we had developed in the past." He said the conference should consider a long-standing invitation to join the Socialist International, in which the ANC has observer status, in this regard.

In his closing speech to delegates on December 20, Mandela defended the ANC's ties with Cuba. "We defeated the enemy with the assistance of many countries, including Cuba and Libya," he said.

The ANC leader pointed toward the im-

available from Pathfinder



The Coming Revolution in South Africa

Jack Barnes

The one-person, one-vote elections in 1994, and the sweeping victory of the African National Congress, were historic steps in the democratic revolution in South Africa. This article explores the social character and roots of apartheid in South African capitalism and the tasks of the toilers in city and countryside in dismantling the legacy of social and economic inequality. Only among the most committed cadres of this ANC-led struggle, Barnes writes, can the working class begin forging a communist leadership. In *New International* no. 5. \$9.00

Nelson Mandela Speaks

Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa

Mandela's speeches from 1990 through 1993 recount the course of struggle that put an end to apartheid and opened the fight for a deep-going political, economic, and social transformation in South Africa. \$18.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Students in Greece occupy universities to protest cutbacks

Students across Greece occupied university buildings and held demonstrations in late November and early December to protest a new law cutting funding for public education. The law is known as the Arsenis Plan, after education minister Gerasimos Arsenis. Students in Athens have suspended their actions, but a dormitory occupation continues in Thessaloniki and protests by unemployed teachers are planned for January.

The cutbacks in education are part of government's austerity plan laid out in the 1998 budget, which the parliament, dominated by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), passed December 22. It includes a virtual freeze in public sector wages and pensions, with a ceiling on annual raises of 2.5 percent when inflation exceeds 5 percent a year.

The social democratic administration of Prime Minister Constantinos Simitis

"The best teachers, the most imaginative, will be fired from the high schools," Maria added. "They will have just yes men. Imagine what that will do to the teachers' union."

"The other issue is that they will change entrance examinations. In effect they will make your last two years of grades count before you can qualify for university. Now it depends on your national entrance exam," explained Vasso, making university entrance more restrictive.

Asked about the participation of students, Maria said, "The occupations are taking place in about a dozen campuses now. Here, we have about 12,000 students. Over 700 participated in the general assembly. That was a significant first step against the Arsenis Plan. This happened despite the opposition of all the political parties including the KNE," the youth group of the Communist Party.

Some 700 students crowded into the amphitheater of the University of Athens Philosophy School December 11 to discuss the government's attack on education and debate the student occupation at the campus.

As dozens of students flowed in and out of the theater, representatives of the various youth organizations took the floor to state their position on the new education law and what to do about it, and then answered questions. "This is a fight for free public education," the representative of the Left Coalition of the Philosophy School (SAF) shouted into the microphone. "We have begun a movement capable of defeating the government's plans. Why stop now? In the past, it has been movements of occupation that have netted us gains."

This position was contested by a representative of the Communist Youth of Greece (KNE). "We are opposed to the law," she said, "but the occupations involve a small number of people and by closing down the schools they prevent students from participating in protests against the law." Many applauded, but others heckled and com-



Students occupied several universities in Greece at the end of 1997, protesting latest government attacks on education. Above, students protest in Athens in February 1997.

mented from the floor, "Then why don't you participate in the protests that are going on? Why are you siding with the government?"

To the same mixed and rowdy response, the representative of the youth organization of the ruling Social Democratic Party of Greece (PASOK), accused those supporting the occupation of being irresponsible and not participating "in a genuine effort to modernize Greek education" and holding on to a "mistaken reading of Marx." Representatives of two right-wing student groups also spoke. In the end, a proposal to continue the occupation was narrowly defeated.

The next day some 3,000 high school and college students chanted "They will remain on paper," referring to the Arsenis measures, as they marched through Athens as part of a nationwide demonstration. Most protesters were from the Athens area, but some came from Thessaloniki, Patras, Xanthi, and other cities. The action was organized by the Coordinating Committee of Student Associations of the Occupied Campuses. Elias, a student from Thessaloniki who is involved in the occupation there, said, "We will hold out until Christmas and then maybe until Easter."

The high school contingent was visibly in a militant mood. Among them were students from the 15th High School of Kipseli in central Athens, who took part in a defense team in a demonstration that faced riot

police. The students chanted to onlookers in busy shopping districts to "join us to fight for free public education." Many people walking by called out their support.

THESSALONIKI —The dorms at the university here house students from working-class families and a high percentage of students from the Mideast, Africa, and the Balkans. Walking into the occupied administrative office November 24, the lack of heating was obvious. A meeting of Palestinian students was taking place.

"The administrative personnel, as well as the union of the maintenance workers at the dorms, have voted not to support us," said one of the occupation organizers. "They even stopped taking out the garbage. We have had to organize tasks like that ourselves." The actions here are broadly supported by those living in the dorms. Weekly general assemblies draw 500–700 students. The main issues are the fact that the new law calls charging rent at the dorms of up to \$65 per month, as well as new disciplinary regulations on students housed here.

"What is the meaning of free education if we have to pay for the dorms?" asked Sophia as she gave *Militant* reporters an update of their struggle. Sophia is an activist in the Committee of Struggle, which meets every day to coordinate however many students who want to participate. "We only apply general assembly decisions," she said.

REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

justifies the austerity measures by pushing for acceptance into the European Monetary Union (EMU). Greece is currently not expected to meet the EU criteria for joining the "common currency" before the turn of the century, but the government hopes to join in 2001. The country's budget deficit stands at 4.4 percent of Gross Domestic Product, well above the 3 percent required for joining the EMU. The government measures have intensified the class struggle over the last year. Social protests have included a wave of walkouts by sailors and teachers and highway blockades by farmers last February, a one-day general strike December 18, and the student occupations.

Militant reporters Georges Mehrabian, Bobbis Misailides, and Natasha Terlexis sent the following reports.

ATHENS—It was a dark, cold, and windy December 9 as we approached the large complex that houses the Philosophy School at the University of Athens. All the access doors were closed for the night. Large banners hung in front: "Student Occupation. No To The Arsenis Plan." We were met at one door by a student guard of about six.

Surprised at two workers coming to show support, the students welcomed us warmly as they opened the door for us.

There were about 50 students on site that night, the large majority of them women. Maria, a language student and an acquaintance of ours, spotted us and took us over to talk with the group she was sitting with. "The government's plan, by removing the seniority list for hiring of teachers, will leave most of us jobless," explained Vasso. Graduates of this faculty generally become language and history teachers in secondary schools. Under the new law, the names of graduates will no longer be put on a list and guaranteed a job — even if after many years and at inadequate wages — as had been the practice. "Not only that, but those that have jobs will be regularly tested, supposedly to check their qualifications. This is a way to do away with tenure in the public schools and get rid of 'troublesome' teachers."

Forum calls for Australian and New Zealand troops to quit Bougainville

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — "With Australian and New Zealand troops on the ground in Bougainville since mid-November, a confrontation with independence fighters there is more and more inevitable," Bob Aiken told a Militant Labor Forum here December 5. Aiken is a member of the Communist League and the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.

"What is unfolding now is a struggle over whether there will be an imperialist-imposed 'peace' or peace determined by the people of Bougainville" after a nine-year war, he said. "And it's clear where Canberra and Wellington stand — they remain completely opposed to self-determination and are taking diplomatic, political, and military action to block it. They are trying to close down the political space won through the severe military defeats suffered by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) at the hands of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) in 1996, which contributed to the military mutiny and popular rebellion that shook PNG's capital Port Moresby and three other major towns in March 1997."

The pro-independence BRA and Bougainville Interim Government (BIG) hope to see a referendum on independence, but the governments of Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea have openly rejected such a possibility, Aiken said. Bougainvilleans' longstanding aspirations for independence were ignored in 1975, he explained, when the island was incorporated into the newly independent Papua New Guinea by the Australian colonial rulers, with the support of most politicians in Port Moresby.

Canberra and Wellington have packaged the initial stage of the intervention as "an unarmed 'Truce Monitoring Group,' but this is a lie," Aiken stated. "In fact, while they may or may not be carrying weapons at this moment, the might of the Australian and New Zealand military forces are behind these 'monitors.'"

The deployment is formally under New Zealand rather than Australian military command because the close direct links between the PNGDF and the Australian military would immediately expose the supposedly neutral operations. It involves some 200 Australian and New Zealand troops backed up by the HMNZS *Canterbury*, two other New Zealand ships, Hercules aircraft, and three Iroquois helicopters.

"Australia's defense minister, Ian McLachlan, stated that only the Australian armed forces have the logistic capability to sustain a long-term intervention," Aiken said. Two days after the forum, two supply ships — the HMAS *Tobruk* and the HMAS *Success* — were reported to have arrived from Australia.

"In all, thousands of Australian and New Zealand military personnel are already directly involved," Aiken explained. And to

provide additional political cover to this imperialist intervention, a handful of troops from Fiji and Vanuatu have just arrived.

A truce between the PNGDF and the BRA has been in effect formally since October, Aiken said, but "there has been no serious fighting for many months," although some PNGDF troops were implicated in assassinations of former political allies of Port Moresby on Bougainville.

The creation of the Truce Monitoring Group was part of a formal agreement between the governments of Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea, without the participation of the BRA and BIG. Following a further round of talks at the end of January 1998 between PNG government officials and BRA and BIG representatives, the intervention force is likely to be renamed a "peace-keeping" force, perhaps with a United Nations mandate.

"The big job today is to get out the facts. Despite the lack of publicity given to the operation, this is an intervention to reassert the domination of Australian and New Zealand imperialism," Aiken said. There have been no protest actions in Australia against the intervention to date. "Opposing intervention by Canberra and Wellington is not only in the interests of the Bougainvillean people but also in the interests of workers and farmers here," he concluded.

Meanwhile, in part to provide further political cover for Australian interference in the affairs of the people of Bougainville and elsewhere, as well as to promote Australian nationalism, the conservative Liberal-National party coalition government in Canberra enthusiastically signed the anti-land mine treaty in Ottawa.

ACTION PROGRAM TO CONFRONT THE COMING ECONOMIC CRISIS

Cancel the Third World debt
Shorten the workweek
Enforce affirmative action

An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis

EDITED BY DOUG JENNESS
How a program to fight for jobs and affirmative action, and to combat imperialism's pillage of the Third World, is crucial to uniting working people internationally. Available in English, French, Icelandic, Spanish, and Swedish. \$3.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell *Pathfinder* books and pamphlets

Steelworkers, meatpackers buy socialist books and press

Below are several of the reports sent in on sales of *Pathfinder* books and the *Militant* newspaper in the month of December.

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper from Chicago, Detroit, and Des Moines, Iowa, sold 27 copies of the *Militant* to members of the United Steelworkers of America who were recently on strike against Uniroyal in Indiana. Almost 1,000 strikers gathered at the New Haven High School December 27 to discuss and vote on the contract that ended their two-month walkout.

On his way out of the union meeting, one of the strikers said he would only buy the newspaper if it said the truth about workers' struggles, not what's in the interests of big corporations. After talking with *Militant* supporters for a few minutes, he bought an issue of the paper and a *Pathfinder* catalog.

Verónica Poses
Chicago, Illinois

Distributors of *Pathfinder* books in Des Moines had an excellent month of sales in December. Since winter

of five issues of the Marxist magazine *New International* in English and Spanish were among the titles sold to industrial workers.

Socialist workers also had success in selling books to young people and workers who came to the bookstore. Three books were sold to young women attending a class on the U.S. war threats against Iraq, and seven at a *Militant* Labor Forum on the fight against racist and fascist attacks. There's also been an increase in walk-in sales, reinforcing the importance of volunteers keeping the bookstore open with regular hours.

Tim Mailhot
Des Moines, Iowa

A display on the history of the Russian revolution in the window of the Boston *Pathfinder* bookstore prompted a customer to purchase the *Collected Works* of V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party in Russia that led workers and peasants in the first victorious socialist revolution in 1917. In addition to the *Collected Works*, another 40 books and pamphlets were sold in the bookstore during the month of December.

Socialists here have organized a weekly public class series and took advantage of the reissue of Leon Trotsky's *Europe and America: Two Speeches on Imperialism*, to have two classes on the pamphlet. Eight copies were purchased by those attending, as well as several copies of related titles, such as *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* by Lenin.

In January socialists are sponsoring a series on the fight for women's rights to coincide with a number of actions in the Boston area on the 25th anniversary of the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision issued by the United States Supreme Court decriminalizing abortion. A special on the three-part Education for Socialist series, *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation*, is being offered for the month's activities.

After a slow start early in the month, socialists made a special effort to continue setting up literature tables around the city, especially in Boston's Black community, which had fallen off for some time. *Militant* supporters sold a total of 11 titles on these street tables, plus dozens of copies of the socialist newsweekly.

Two pamphlets were sold by a socialist who works in a factory organized by the United Steelworkers of America. Follow-

ing a police attack on a march protesting the portrayal of Native Americans in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on Thanksgiving Day, a USWA member purchased a copy of *Genocide against the Indians* by George Novack, to learn more about the history of the U.S. government's repression of native peoples. After discussions on events in Ireland another union member purchased *On the Irish Freedom Struggle* by freedom fighter Bernadette Devlin McAliskey.

John Harding
Boston, Massachusetts

The main reason we made our goal in Twin Cities last month is that we organized a bookstore open house on December 6. It was an all-day event with plenty of coffee and pastries. A video interview with Pombo — Cuban Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas — was shown during the day. We had publicized the event widely a head of time along with a special sale on selected titles. We didn't have a large attendance, but sold close to \$300 worth of books.

Doug Jenness
St. Paul, Minnesota

We sold 73 books during the month of December. Our monthly goal is 65. We held a holiday open house before Christmas where we sold more than 30 titles.

Eric Simpson
Miami, Florida

Participants in the international socialist conference and Communist League convention held in Toronto January 1-4 bought 78 books and two *Pathfinder* Readers Club memberships.

Bestsellers were the pamphlet *Europe and America*; two recently published *Cahiers de formation communiste* (Education for communists) that are available in French:

Book Sales from Pathfinder Bookstores

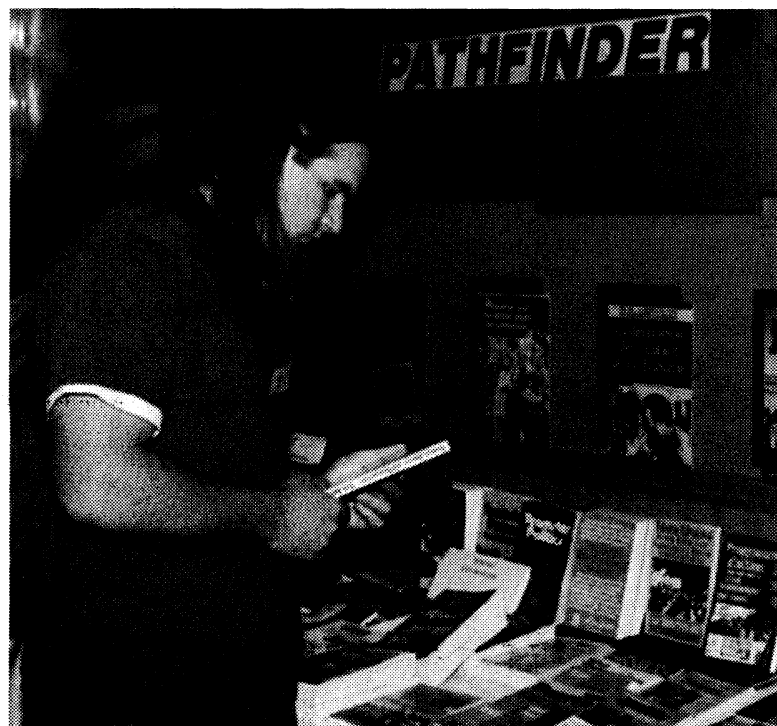
Countries/Cities	December			Previous months		
	Goal	Sold	%	Nov.	Oct.	Sept.
CANADA						
Toronto	80	144	180%	59%	103%	78%
Montreal	68	70	103%	135%	121%	64%
Vancouver	50	22	44%	171%	63%	88%
Canada Total	198	236	119%	111%	101%	75%
ICELAND	5	5	100%	100%	480	100%
GREECE	13	9	69%	215%	208	223%
NEW ZEALAND						
Auckland	42	40	95%	94%	57%	73%
Christchurch	32	11	34%	57%	36%	54%
N.Z. Total	74	51	69%	81%	49%	66%
SWEDEN	55	37	67%	216%	131	89%
UNITED STATES						
Birmingham	45	83	184%	51%	109%	103%
Boston	65	100	154%	71%	140%	166%
Philadelphia	41	50	122%	95%	253%	105%
Miami	65	73	112%	314%	128%	120%
Des Moines	50	55	110%	184%	132%	64%
Twin Cities	104	107	103%	59%	108%	60%
Washington, D.C.	70	67	96%	120%	186%	223%
Atlanta	48	39	81%	81%	117%	88%
Detroit	54	37	69%	44%	129%	142%
Los Angeles	120	81	68%	88%	211%	128%
Chicago	77	47	61%	52%	152%	121%
New York	245	111	45%	39%	99%	115%
San Francisco	200	90	45%	93%	141%	89%
Cleveland	50	21	42%	34%	80%	32%
Pittsburgh	63	22	35%	65%	90%	100%
Seattle	80	27	34%	39%	85%	60%
Houston	65	20	31%	71%	175%	49%
Newark	171	28	16%	36%	101%	129%
U.S. Total	1613	1058	66%	77%	132%	96%
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%			
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	106	71%	77%	147%	153%
Manchester	56	24	43%	59%	77%	71%
U.K. Total	206	130	63%	72%	92%	87%
FRANCE	30	11	37%	420%	397	533%
AUSTRALIA	36	13	36%	208%	311	108%

PATHFINDER BOOKS SOLD IN THE UNIONS

Unions	December			Previous months		
	Goal	Sales	Total	Nov.	Oct.	Sept.
BRITAIN						
AEEU	5	6	120%	40%	100%	40%
RMT	6	0	0%	100%	0%	83%
TGWU	7	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
U.K. Total	18	6	33%	44%	28%	39%
UNITED STATES						
UFCW	16	21	131%	38%	94%	233%
UNITE	14	8	57%	43%	40%	21%
USWA	40	20	50%	80%	75%	17%
UAW	50	23	46%	14%	22%	24%
IAM	60	14	23%	20%	55%	20%
UTU	94	13	14%	17%	14%	15%
OCAW	44	0	0%	7%	7%	14%
U.S. Total	318	99	31%	26%	37%	21%
CANADA						
IAM	7	7	100%	50%	88%	75%
USWA*	18	0	0%	44%	28%	0%
Canada Total	25	7	28%	46%	46%	23%
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	1	25%	0%	75%	25%
* no report						

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMW — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party by James P. Cannon; *The Socialist Revolution and the Fight for Women's Liberation*; and *Anarchism and Anarcho-syndicalism* by Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Guy Tremblay
Toronto, Ontario



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Pathfinder book table at Toronto conference was popular spot

weather in Des Moines makes street tables impractical, bookstore supporters mailed regular readers of *Pathfinder* books a special flyer advertising a final "super saver" sale of overstocked titles and followed up with phone calls. A regional team traveled to Kansas City to meet with longtime readers of *Pathfinder* there. And an open house celebrating the 39th anniversary of the Cuban revolution was held at the bookstore on New Year's Eve.

Socialist workers who are active in the United Food and Commercial Workers union decided to see how far over their regular monthly sales goal they could go. Maggie Trowe, who works at the Swift meatpacking plant in Marshalltown, explained, "We met and discussed every week who we were talking to and what political questions were being discussed, as well as ideas on how to get around the plant to meet new people. In doing this, we sold 10 books to co-workers at the Swift plant.

"Co-workers were interested in titles on Marxist economics, Che Guevara's ideas on the transition to socialism, and the question of where revolutionary leadership comes from." Socialist workers in other industrial plants sold an additional seven books during the month. A total

Young Socialists Fund Drive

CHICAGO — Some last minute contributions toward the recent Young Socialist Fund Drive were received at the YS national office after the *Militant* went to press last week. The final results include a contribution of \$81 from Boston, where a *Militant* Labor Forum was held on the recent trial of Louise Woodward, followed by a fund-raising dinner attended by 20 people.

In all, the drive raised \$5,181, well over the \$4,400 national goal.

— Verónica Poses

Gov't supporters massacre 45 peasants in Mexico

BY BARRY FATLAND

LOS ANGELES — On the morning of December 22, several dozen hooded gunmen opened fire on Tzotzil Indian refugees who were praying in a church in Acteal, a hamlet in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. At least 45 men, women, and children were killed and dozens more were wounded in the attack.

Those targeted were among a group of about 300 working people who had formed an organization called Las Abejas (The Bees) organizing support for land reform and other basic rights for rural toilers.

María Vázquez Gómez, who lost all nine members of her family in the massacre, said: "They accuse us of being Zapatistas, but we don't belong to any party or political organization. We were never able to convince them of that and they warned us that if we didn't join the PRI, they were going to kill all of us." She was referring to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party.

According to witnesses, the massacre lasted for nearly 6 hours, with local "public safety" police stationed about 500 meters from where the crime was taking place.

Pedro Vázquez Ruiz, among 200 people

from Acteal who took refuge in a school in the adjacent village of Polhó after the slaughter, said he had fled from another village to settle in Acteal in October "because the PRI supporters were demanding 400 pesos from each of us so they could buy guns and attack the sympathizers of the Zapatistas. They said they would kill us if we didn't pay, so I left."

The Jan. 1, 1994, armed revolt by indigenous peoples in Chiapas, led by the Zapatista Army for National Liberation (EZLN), brought the intolerable conditions of oppression and exploitation in that region to the attention of the world.

Zapatista rebels eventually agreed to negotiate a cease-fire with the federal government. Negotiations broke down in September 1996.

Outrage over the Christmas-time massacre throughout Mexico and the world pressured the Zedillo government to arrest Jacinto Arias Cruz, the PRI mayor of Chenalhó, a municipality that includes Acteal, charging him with providing the AK-47s and other heavy weapons to the thugs and organizing them to carry out the assault. Some 40 people have been formally charged



Demonstrators in Chiapas celebrate fourth anniversary of revolt led by Zapatista Army for National Liberation. Peasants killed were fighting for land reform and rights.

in relation to the crime so far.

In a December 26 communiqué, EZLN Subcommander Marcos stated that "the direct responsibility for these bloody deeds lies with Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León and the Interior Minister, who have for the past two years given the green light to the counterinsurgency plan of the federal army."

The massacre and subsequent anger over it in Mexico sparked the resignation of Interior Minister Emilio Chuayffet. Zedillo replaced him with Francisco Labastida Ochoa, who calls Chuayffet his "personal friend."

Several hundred people protested the massacre in front of the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles January 2, demanding the end of the army occupation of the indigenous communities in Mexico and calling for an independent investigation of the killing. The sponsoring group, the National Committee for Democracy in Mexico, also called for an end to government funding, training, and equipping of the rightist paramilitary groups in Chiapas.

Barry Fatland is a member of the United Transportation Union in Los Angeles.

Israeli regime suffers defections and protests

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's regime suffered another blow January 4 as Foreign Minister David Levy resigned, leaving the governing coalition with a marginal hold on parliament. The Labor Party, among others, announced it would move a no-confidence vote in parliament the following week. If the vote carries, it would force an election as early as March.

The main pressure fracturing the ruling coalition, which is headed by Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party, is the ongoing Palestinian resistance in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. On January 2 tens of thousands of Palestinians rallied in Gaza to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of Hamas, which calls for an end to Zionist rule in any part of Palestine.

Levy said "the partnership" with Netanyahu "had failed," citing disagreements on the so-called peace process. His Geshar party supports a partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from West Bank territories.

The West Bank has been occupied by Israeli troops since the Zionist regime seized it from Jordan in 1967. Under accords between Tel Aviv and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Israeli regime is supposed to cede control over much of the West

Bank to Palestinians. So far the Palestinian Authority has limited control over only 27 percent of the territory. At the same time, both the current regime and its Labor Party predecessor have encouraged the expansion of Zionist settlements in West Bank. And the Netanyahu government continues to waver on whether to carry out three withdrawals of Israeli troops from parts of the West Bank, as stipulated in the accords.

Levy's defection left Netanyahu's government with only 61 of the 120 parliamentary seats, and this bare majority appears shaky. Public Security Minister Avidgor Kahalani, for example, threatened to withdraw his four members of the Third Way Party if Netanyahu does not carry out the troop withdrawals from Palestinian territory. There are equal numbers of coalition members who oppose any return of land to Palestinian hands.

Washington, which continues to pressure Tel Aviv to stabilize relations with other regimes in the region, called for the Israeli government to come to a U.S.-sponsored meeting in Washington January 20 with a concrete proposal on a "credible and substantial ... redeployment" from roughly 10 percent of the West Bank. Israeli infrastruc-



Tens of thousands of Palestinians rallied in Gaza January 2 to mark 10th anniversary of founding of Hamas.

ture minister Ariel Sharon rejected U.S. demands, and urged that any withdrawal should be "greatly limited." Some rightists are calling for Sharon to replace Levy as foreign minister.

Palestinian Cabinet member Hanan Ashrawi noted that all the hubbub in Tel Aviv about elections could "be used as a pretext to put the peace process on hold."

In quitting the cabinet, Levy also accused the prime minister — a longtime political rival — of ignoring the mounting problems of unemployment and poverty among Israelis. On January 5 Levy's party voted against Netanyahu's 1998 austerity budget. The measure passed in the parliament by a 58 to 52 vote, with one abstention. It includes \$391 million in cuts.

Unemployment in Israel has topped 8 percent — its highest point in more than three years — and it's expected to rise further. Hundreds of people demonstrated in the streets of Ofakim, Israel, in late December protesting unemployment. The demonstrations shut down stores, schools, and municipal services. The official jobless rate in that city stands at 14.3 percent, and residents say it's actually closer to 20 percent. At the head of these actions were city workers, who have not gotten paid for November. The government claims it cannot pay the wages without firing dozens of workers, cutting government services, and raising property taxes by 20 percent.

Socialist Educational Conference London • January 17-18 •

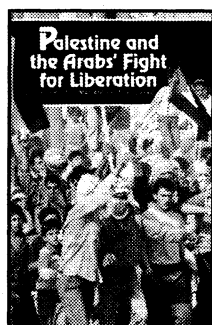
Sponsored by The Communist League
and Young Socialists in London



Venue:
National Children's Bureau
8, Wakley St.
London EC1

For further information call:
London: 0171 928 7993
Manchester: 0161 839 1766

For further reading
from Pathfinder



Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation

Fred Feldman and Georges Sayad
An overview of the Palestinian struggle from World War I to the beginning of the intifada in 1987. \$4.00

Israel and the Arab Revolution

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM
Gus Horowitz \$7.00

Opening Guns of World War III

WASHINGTON'S ASSAULT ON IRAQ

Jack Barnes

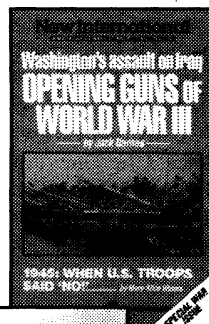
The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New International* no. 7. \$12.00

Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?

Maxime Rodinson

Examines the Zionist colonization of Palestine and how the state of Israel was formed.

\$11.95



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.
Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Black farmers seek gov't compensation

BY KEN MORGAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Faced with a costly battle over a discrimination lawsuit filed by hundreds of Black farmers, the Clinton administration agreed December 19 to a six-month mediation process to settle the complaints. The Black farmers had filed a \$2 billion suit last August against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Agriculture Secretary Daniel Glickman. It contends that Black farmers are victims of racial discrimination because of repeatedly being denied loans and other management and technical services by USDA.

Between 1983 and 1997, the farmers assert, the USDA failed to investigate hundreds of discrimination complaints filed by Black farmers. These practices led to foreclosures, bankruptcies, and other serious economic problems.

The National Black Farmers Association has been organizing actions to call national attention to this fight. On Dec. 12, 1996, about 50 Black farmers protested in front of the White House against discriminatory USDA practices, demanding justice and a meeting with President William Clinton. They returned to the nation's capital to protest outside the USDA April 23, 1997, two months after that agency released a report acknowledging the discrimination and presenting a supposed plan of action. More than 200 Black farmers and their supporters protested the inadequacy of the plan and the inaction of USDA in resolving the problem.

Black farmers are losing 9,000 acres of land per week. Between 1920 and 1992, the number of farms owned by Blacks decreased from 925,000 to 18,816 — a 98 percent drop. Government statistics show that Black farmers go out of business at three times the rate of their white counterparts. Black farmers' average income is one-third lower than that of whites, and their poverty rate is 20 percent higher.

An Associated Press analysis of lending practices between 1980 and 1992 revealed that Black farmers receive 51 cents for every dollar loaned to whites. The number of loans granted over that period dropped by 66 percent for white farmers and 82 percent for Black farmers. Most Black farms are located in the rural south. In 1982, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission wrote a report titled "The Decline of Black Farming in America," which stated that "unless government policies of neglect and discrimination are changed, there may be no Black farmers by the year 2000."

More than 70 Black farmers and their supporters filled the courtroom here December 19 during proceedings on the lawsuit. U.S. District Court judge Paul Friedman had given the U.S. Department of Agriculture 30 days to develop a speedy way to resolve the hundreds of discrimination complaints, or be confronted with a trial date. Friedman approved a proposal that the more than 1,000 complaints be mediated on a case-by-case basis, as opposed to as a group, with a deadline of six months.

On January 26, Friedman is supposed to assess the progress of the settlements and the adequacy of the mediation process. Black farmers and their lawyers contend that it will take at least two years, not six months to hear and mediate complaints individually.

One of the points Friedman left unresolved is whether the government can invoke a statute of limitations to deny damages in about 95 percent of the discrimination cases. Michael Sitcov, a Justice Department attorney defending the USDA, stated that farmers may only be able to receive forgiveness of their debts and top priority for new loans.

"We want debt relief and compensation for our suffering," Everett Greer of Yazoo, Mississippi, echoing the sentiments of other Black farmers at the hearing. The farmers note that since their original complaints were shunted aside, the statute of limitations should not apply.

Opponents of the Black farmers' fight say they are not good farmers and their acreage is too small to compete. One Alabama farmer attending the court deliberations dismissed this claim, saying, "We have always had to do more with less. 'While farmers who are Black confront the same problems as all small family farmers — including government policies favoring big capitalist producers, low prices at the market, and natural disasters — the activists are adamant that the racist practices of the USDA and private banks have been at least a coequal reason for the disappearing Black farmer."

The farmers demanded to meet with President William Clinton at their demonstration a year ago. On December 17 the meeting happened, but not without controversy. Instead of a Black farmers' meeting, it was turned into a small farmers' meeting. Clinton limited the number of Black farmers attending to 10, and made vague promises to "bring moral and political pressure to bear when possible."

Tim Pigford, the lead plaintiff in the suit, addressed Clinton, saying, "You have been in the White House six years of the time that the USDA ignored our discrimination com-

N.Y. cops slay another Black youth



Militant/Naomi Craine

About 75 people rallied December 28 outside the building where William Whitfield lived, protesting the killing of the 22-year-old Black man by a New York City cop. Whitfield, who was unarmed, was shot in the back by cop Michael Davitt in a Brooklyn grocery store on Christmas day. The rally was called by James Davis, a Black cop who urged those present to "march for victims of police violence as well as the violence we do to ourselves each day." Those who turned out were overwhelmingly people from the predominantly Black and Latino neighborhood who were furious at yet another killing by the police. "How many of us have got to die?" demanded Tory Violet, a young man who knew Whitfield, as he described other cases of police brutality in the neighborhood.

plaints. What have you done in those six years you have been in office?" According to several attendees, the president had no response. Earlier in the day, Agriculture Secretary Glickman had announced plans to seek new money through the 1999 budget request for minority farmers. "This is a day late and a dollar short," stated Walter Powell, a Louisiana farmer.

The farm activists said that despite Clinton's pledge to help, the Justice Department lawyers continued to drag their feet on getting a settlement in the courtroom two days later.

"We are going to again give President

Clinton another chance to do the right thing," said Gary Grant, chairman of the American Association of Black Farmers and Agriculturalists. On the morning of January 26, before the next hearing in Friedman's courtroom, "we will present him a petition signed by Black farmers and their supporters saying, 'Do what you said you were going to do.'" Grant urged "the NAACP, Urban League, AFL-CIO, the million woman and man march supporters, all the farm associations and advocacy groups ... every person wanting justice to join us" for a press conference outside the White House that day, and then to fill the courthouse.

Detroit judge frees cop jailed for murder

BY ROSA GARMENDIA AND WILLIE REID

DETROIT — The recent release of the second cop convicted of the murder of Malice Green has provoked sharp reactions here.

"This is a slap in the face for people who live in Detroit," said Keith, an auto worker who did not want his last name used. "It's as if people in Detroit are not competent enough to make a judgment."

Neatra Massey, Green's oldest daughter, said the family had expected both officers to be freed. "They're getting out. My daddy's dead," she said. "They're going to get what they want no matter what."

On December 31 the city of Detroit woke up to the news that U.S. district judge Lawrence Zatkoff had overturned the conviction of former Detroit police officer Larry Nevers for second degree murder and ordered his released from prison. Five months earlier, the Michigan Supreme Court reversed the conviction of Walter Budzyn. Both former cops were convicted in 1993 for the brutal beating that killed Malice Green. Nevers was serving a 12-25 year sentence. His partner Budzyn has been granted a new trial following an early release from his 8-18 year prison sentence.

Green, an unemployed Black steelworker, was killed in 1992 by savage blows to the head from police flashlights after cops stopped his car in a working-class neighborhood on this city's southwest side. Ambulance technician Mithyim Lewis testified at the trial that he saw Green hanging out of his car window, his body almost touching the pavement, "...He was covered with blood, his entire face, his hair, appeared to be soaked with it."

Zatkoff's approval of Nevers' routine writ of habeas corpus appeal is unusual. Fewer than 1 in 100 such requests are normally granted. In his ruling, Zatkoff wrote that "the guilt or innocence of petitioner Larry Nevers ... is not at issue in this case. What is at issue is the question of whether (Nevers) was afforded his constitutional right to a fair trial."

Zatkoff's justifications for his ruling include:

The trial should have been moved from Detroit because of pretrial publicity.

The movie *Malcolm X*, which opens with video footage of the beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police, should not have been shown to jurors as entertainment during a break. "The movie *Malcolm X* was particularly harmful because of the undeniable parallels between the images and words of that film and the conduct alleged against the

defendant(s)," Zatkoff claimed.

Jurors knew Nevers was once a member of STRESS (Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets), an undercover police unit responsible for the killing of 20 people in the early 1970s. Former members of STRESS reportedly raised funds for the defense of the cops who killed Green.

Jurors knew of the cops' highly publicized preparations for a possible riot, and so feared that would be the result of an acquittal. This was a theme of the pro-cop forces who organized to defend Nevers and Budzyn at the time of their trial.

Nevers' lawyer, Neil Fink, called the judge's opinion "a terrific piece of work." Nancy Nevers, his wife, who has campaigned for his release, said, "This should have happened five months ago. I'm just so thrilled that we finally found some justice today."

A swastika was discovered January 1 on the Green memorial portrait. The phrase "Nevers rules" was also scrawled on this mural, painted at site of his murder. The mural was quickly restored.

Both the Wayne county prosecutor Doug Baker and Mayor Dennis Archer feel the pressure from the continuing anger about this case. "[The new trials] shouldn't be held anywhere else but the city of Detroit," said Archer, who added that "justice will be served" at the new trials of Budzyn and Nevers.

People have begun to visit the Green memorial site. They and others feel differently. "Both of those cops should stay in jail," said Jimmy Ellis, a visitor at the site.

"They already had a fair trial," said Detroit artist Bennie White, who painted the mural of Green.

Rosa Garmendia is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers. Willie Reid is a member of the United Auto Workers. Both are from Detroit.

from Pathfinder

Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s

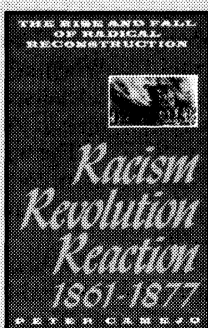
Doug Jenness

Examines the deepening economic and social crisis in the capitalist world and explains how farmers and workers can unite internationally against the mounting assaults from the billionaire bankers, industrialists, and merchants of grain. \$3.50

Racism, Revolution, Reaction, 1861-1877

The Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction
Peter Camejo

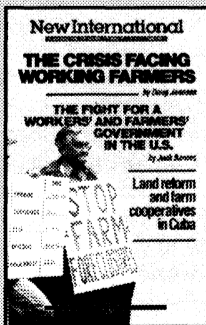
The challenges — ranging from literacy drives to land reform — confronted by the popular revolutionary governments of Radical Reconstruction that arose in the United States following the Civil War, and the counterrevolution that subsequently overthrew them. \$17.95



New International no. 4

- The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States by Jack Barnes
- The Crisis Facing Working Farmers by Doug Jenness

- Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba, two speeches by Fidel Castro \$9.00



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Canadian troops leave Haiti, but police force stays

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — On December 22 the last of the 650 Canadian troops who had been part of the occupation of Haiti were withdrawn. However, Canadian police will remain as part of a United Nations force that is organizing Haitian cops to replace the army as the principal repressive force in the country.

Canada's rulers have used the occasion of the troops' return to try to restore the reputation of the Canadian army as a "peace-keeping" force. The aim is to win support from working people for the continuing presence of Canadian forces in several countries, including in Bosnia, and for future imperialist interventions. In addition to the occupation of Haiti in recent years, the Canadian army and air force were part of the assault on Iraq during the Gulf War.

The real role of the Canadian forces was starkly revealed by a series of brutal murders of Somalis during the presence of the Canadian Airborne Regiment in that country in 1993 as part of a UN "humanitarian" mission. This considerably damaged the reputation of the Canadian army, and the Airborne Regiment was dissolved.

Interviewed by the Montreal daily *La Presse* at a ceremony in Haiti's capital to mark the departure of the Canadian army, Brig. Gen. Robin Gagnon declared, "Security had been reinforced and the 650 troops

have the feeling that they have carried out their duty. And that's without taking account of the numerous humanitarian projects our soldiers have carried out." Speaking alongside Haitian president René Préval, Gagnon admitted, "There were some times when people threw rocks at our vehicles.... Some leaders that I would qualify as marginal tried to mobilize the population against us but it didn't really work."

There were in fact protests against the Canadian forces in Haiti. One such incident was reported in the March 27, 1997, *La Presse* when protesters shouted "Go Home" in English at Canadian soldiers who were patrolling near the national Parliament building. Canadian soldiers were also involved in brutalizing prisoners. The Aug. 7, 1997, *La Presse* reported on two incidents where Haitians taken prisoner by Canadian forces were "insulted and humiliated."

The occupation of Haiti followed the Sept. 19, 1994, invasion by 20,000 U.S. troops, sent on the pretext of restoring Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the presidency. He had previously been ousted in a military coup. Haiti, which



Photos: Haiti Progrès

Above: Protest against the occupation forces of the United Nations in the capital city of Port-Au-Prince July 25, 1997. Left: Canadian soldiers from the UN forces patrol a demonstration last summer.



is one of the poorest countries in the world, had long been a victim of imperialism. Washington carried out a 19-year occupation starting in 1915, and was instrumental in establishing the dictatorship and organizing the army, which ruled the country for many years. Canadian capitalism has benefited as well

from the superexploitation of the Haitian workers and peasants.

Canadian soldiers first arrived in Haiti in March 1995 along with 30 cops. In February 1996 the Canadian forces took the central responsibility for the military force in Haiti, after the Chinese government forced the UN Security Council to set a limit on the number of soldiers that could be financed by the United Nations.

Canadian cops will continue to be present

in Haiti as part of a 300-strong police force set up by the Security Council at the end of last November. Washington will supply helicopters and up to 50 cops for the force. The Argentine government will supply a special intervention force of 90, and other cops will come from France and Mali. This force is to continue training the 5,200-strong Haitian police force. With the dissolution of the army in 1994, the National Police is now the principal repressive force in the country.

However, the weakening of imperialism is shown by the fact that the military occupation has not been able to halt ongoing protests against government austerity measures pushed by the International Monetary Fund and the sell off of state-owned enterprises to U.S. investors.

Joe Young is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7625.

Socialist conference in Toronto celebrates 100 years of fight against Yankee imperialism

BY NAOMI CRAINE

TORONTO — Nearly 300 people welcomed in 1998 as the year of the 100th anniversary of the struggle against U.S. imperialism in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines at a socialist conference held here January 1-2. That anniversary and the weight of the Cuban revolution in a world of growing capitalist disorder was the theme of the opening presentation, given by Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*.

Discussion on this talk and one on "The siren call of economic nationalism and Washington's march toward fascism and war," by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, were at the heart of the conference. Most of the participants — who hailed from across Canada and

the United States, as well as from Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom — stayed as delegates or observers to the Fifth Constitutional Convention of the Communist League January 3-4.

The discussion on the main presentations, which continued over the two days of the conference, built on the issues joined at a southern regional educational conference in Birmingham, Alabama, in December (a report on that conference appeared in the January 12 issue of the *Militant*).

"Independence for Quebec — justice and equality — on the front lines of the fight against Canadian imperialism," read one of the banners decorating the hall. One conference session was devoted to a video followed by a discussion on the rise of the Quebecois struggle against national oppres-

sion in the 1960s and '70s. Among the displays that highlighted themes of the conference were bound volumes of socialist newspapers from that period.

More than 40 young people attended the gathering. "We've spent enough time under this capitalist system, which causes so much harm to people," said Tonatiuh García, 17, a student at Rochelle High school, in Quebec City. García, who is originally from Mexico, joined the Young Socialists (YS) a few months ago. The conference reflected the growth of the Young Socialists in Canada over the past year. García helped organize a rally in celebration of the 30th anniversary of Che Guevara's fall in combat near the Quebec City courthouse. He was impressed by those he met at the conference from the United States and the struggles of which they are a part. "I always thought everyone in the U.S. was capitalist," García said.

"When I realized that the struggle for Quebec independence was a question of revolution, I started to become interested in other revolutions throughout history," said Alexandre Geoffroy, 29 years old and a student in Drummondville, an industrial town near Montreal. Geoffroy has long been involved in the struggle for Quebecois independence, but it was at a demonstration against cutbacks in education last year that he met the Young Socialists and bought an issue of *Nouvelle Internationale*, the French-language edition of *New Internationalist*, on the fight for a workers and farmers government. "Now, I've seen how real revolutionaries are open to debate and criticism and can advance revolutionary struggles. What I've learned from this convention is that, in order to come to correct conclusions about the world, you need to think collectively, and this is the role of a party," said Geoffroy.

"I realized that only by getting rid of capitalism will women be emancipated, will Blacks be liberated," said Ndidi Onukwulu, a 19-year-old Black student from Vancouver. She explained that after the conference she is looking forward to finding an industrial job in Vancouver in order to participate in political work in the trade unions with mem-

bers of the YS and Communist League.

Onukwulu, a member of the YS for three months, said she especially enjoyed the class at the conference titled, "Who will change the world? The Battle of Birmingham and the fight to end racist segregation."

Other classes offered at the conference were on "Iraq and the working-class campaign against imperialist war"; "From the Battle of Bogside to Bloody Sunday: the Irish struggle for freedom"; "From the defeat of Radical Reconstruction to the Spanish American War: the rise of U.S. imperialism and the struggle against it"; and "Working farmers in the whirlwind of capitalist crisis: From Mad Cow Disease to Round-up Ready Beans — The scourge of nationalism and the fight for a worker-farmer alliance."

Kevin Austin, 18, became interested in revolutionary figures while in high school. He's from Woodstock, Canada, an agricultural town of 30,000 where his father, a hog farmer who was forced into bankruptcy, currently works for General Motors. He attended the class on the struggle of farmers. "I hadn't done any research on the need for a workers and farmers alliance or how capitalism in decline ferments nationalist sentiments among farmers."

There were also participants from more than a dozen cities in the United States at the conference. One of them was Bill Schmitt, 16, a high school student from the Detroit area. He's been reading Karl Marx for several years, but was excited to learn about the range of Marxist literature available through Pathfinder Press when he found *New Internationalist* no. 10, with the article "Imperialism's March towards Fascism and War," in a used bookstore. When asked if he's a member of the Young Socialists, Schmitt said, "No, but I'm planning to join this weekend."

The next issue of the *Militant* will carry more complete coverage of the socialist conference and Communist League convention.

Ruth Nebbia, a member of the United Transportation Union in New York, contributed to this article.

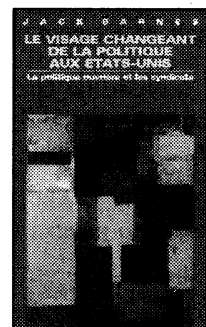
FROM PATHFINDER

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of twentieth century. It shows how million of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society.



In French, \$21.95
In Spanish \$21.95
In English \$19.55

Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism

Carlos Tablada

Quoting extensively from Guevara's writings and speeches on building socialism, this book presents the interrelationship of the market, economic planning, material incentives, and voluntary work; and why profit and other capitalist categories cannot be yardsticks for measuring progress in the transition to socialism.



In English \$17.95
In Spanish \$19.95
In French \$26.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014, Tel: (212) 741-0690. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

Help send books to Cuban fighters

BY PETER THIERJUNG

TORONTO — "See you at the bookfair in February" was the message supporters of Pathfinder Press recently received in a New Year's greeting card from a student in Havana, referring to the upcoming International Havana Bookfair that will take place February 4-10. At the last Havana bookfair in 1996 this young woman, a member of the Federation of University Students, had returned to the Pathfinder booth day after day to read and discuss several books on communist and working-class politics.

"She was part of what you could call the Cuban version of the Pathfinder Readers Club — Cuban youth, workers, and others who visit the booth, sit down, and read Pathfinder books for hours," *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martin Koppel reported to participants in the international socialist conference held here January 1-2. "There are many such people in Cuba who are hungry for Pathfinder books because they are convinced they need these political weapons. That's why contributions are needed for the Books For Cuba Fund."

Koppel's appeal at the socialist conference launched a campaign to raise money for the Books for Cuba Fund. This fund was set up several years ago to make possible donations of Pathfinder books to institutions ranging from university and municipal libraries to workers' bookshelves in several Cuban factories, making these books available to thousands of people.

Those present contributed or pledged more than \$4,600 at the conference for the Books for Cuba Fund. This money is needed to meet requests for book donations around the time of the Havana bookfair.

Koppel also described the response of revolutionary-minded youth in Santa Clara that he met during a *Militant* reporting trip that covered the massive turnout in October to honor Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara and other fellow revo-

lutionaries who fell in combat in Bolivia in 1967. One student, a member of the Che Studies Program at the University of Las Villas in Santa Clara, was delighted to see copies of two new Pathfinder titles, editions in Spanish of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes and *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada.

"Seeing these books, and learning that communist workers sell them at picket lines and in their factories, opened her eyes further to the class struggle in the United States," Koppel said. The Che Studies Program there received a donation of Pathfinder books. So did workers at the Ariguanabo textile plant south of Havana, he added.

At the conference, supporters of Pathfinder in Canada also contributed to another fund, which was launched to cover the costs of sending a young worker and leader of the Young Socialists from Montreal to participate in the bookfair. This unionist will



Militant/Brian Taylor

Dozens of Cubans spent hours at Pathfinder booth during February 1996 Havana Bookfair. The Fund makes it possible to get Pathfinder into the hands of Cubans.

be part of an international team of socialist workers and youth from the United Kingdom, Sweden, New Zealand and other countries who will staff the Pathfinder exhibit. Some CAN\$1,800 was raised in donations and pledges to this fund. In each of these countries Pathfinder supporters are raising

funds to cover the costs of the booth and of sending a member of this team.

Contributions to the Books for Cuba Fund are urgently needed. Checks should be made payable to the *Militant*, earmarked for the Books for Cuba Fund, and sent to the *Militant* at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

West Coast Regional Socialist Conference January 24-25 Seattle

Main Presentations

The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's March toward Fascism and War

JACK BARNES, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

- ▶ After Asia: the looming crisis in Europe
- ▶ The seduction of the entire North American left by the new leadership of the AFL-CIO
- ▶ Liberal reformers and petty bourgeois radicals walk workers and youth toward Patrick Buchanan's fascist trap
- ▶ Oliver North joins outcry against horror of sweatshops abroad
- ▶ Poor Little Tibet: Today's Poor Little Finland
- ▶ Seattle, Boeing: the central political test of workers' space in the war industries

100 Years of Struggle against Yankee Imperialism: The Weight of the Cuban Revolution in a World of Growing Capitalist Disorder

MARY-ALICE WATERS, Editor of 'New International' magazine

- ▶ The special period, rectification, and the homecoming of Che Guevara's Reinforcement Brigade
- ▶ From Brazil to Japan: Washington's drive to buy up the world
- ▶ The scope of the spreading economic crisis in Latin America and the tasks of revolutionary fighters
- ▶ The leadership transition to new generations of Cuban communists
- ▶ The combat example set by the Cuban people and their Revolutionary Armed Forces

Schedule

Saturday, January 24

- 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Registration
- 12 noon Reception
- 1:00 p.m. Opening presentations and discussion

9:00 P.M. Sendoff for international team to Havana Book Fair and Young Socialists delegation to Cairo meeting to discuss 1997 World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana and next steps for international youth movement.

Social to follow.

Sunday, January 25

- 8:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Classes
- 11:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Classes
- 2:15-5:45 p.m. Discussion (continued) and Summary of Conference

Classes

Who will change the world?

The battle of Birmingham and the fight to end racist segregation
Stephen Bloodworth and Derek Bracey

Iraq and the working-class campaign against imperialist war

To be announced

From the defeat of Radical Reconstruction to the Spanish-American War: the rise of U.S. imperialism and the struggle against it

Ted Leonard and Andrea Morell

Working farmers in the whirlwind of capitalist crisis: From Mad Cow Disease to Round-Up Ready Beans — The scourge of nationalism and the fight for a worker-farmer alliance
Doug Jenness

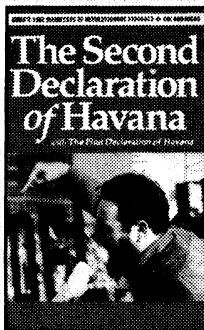
The fight for Quebec independence: On the front lines of the struggle against Canadian imperialism

Michel Prairie and Jason Phelps

HOSTS:

Young Socialists National Committee, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle branches of the Socialist Workers Party

AVAILABLE FROM PATHFINDER



The Second Declaration of Havana

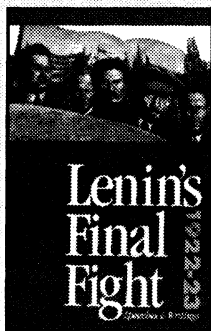
In 1962, as the example of Cuba's socialist revolution spread throughout the Americas, the workers and farmers of Cuba issued their uncompromising call for a continent-wide revolutionary struggle. \$5.00

Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings, 1922-23

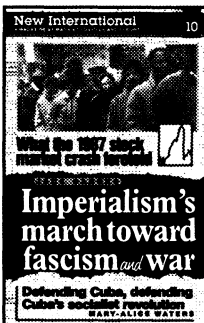
V.I. Lenin

In the early 1920s Lenin waged a political battle in the leadership of the Communist Party of the USSR to maintain the course that had enabled the workers and peasants to overthrow the old tsarist empire, carry out the first successful socialist revolution, and begin building a world communist movement. Also available in Spanish. \$19.95



Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution

Mary-Alice Waters



In face of the greatest economic difficulties in the history of the revolution, Cuba's workers and farmers are defending their political power, their independence and sovereignty, and the historic course they set out on more than 35 years ago. In *New International* no. 10. \$14.00

AVAILABLE AT BOOKSTORES, INCLUDING THOSE ON PAGE 12.



Auto workers in São Bernardo do Campo, Brazil, protest pay cut and layoff threats, December 11, 1997



Selling the *Militant* at Boeing plant gate in Seattle, Dec. 5, 1997

FOR TRANSPORTATION AND MORE INFORMATION:

Young Socialists: (773) 772-0551
Los Angeles SWP: (213) 380-9460
San Francisco SWP: (415) 282-6255
Seattle SWP: (206) 323-1755

Northern Ireland

Continued from front page

when they are faced with having to do a deal with nationalists — they intimidate and terrorize and kill ordinary Catholics. But it won't work," a Sinn Fein official told the press.

The three prisoners charged with killing Wright belong to the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), a group that opposes Republican participation in the all-party talks and the cease-fire called by the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Prison officials had placed members of the INLA and the LVF in the same wing of Long Kesh, fostering ongoing tensions. Republican and Loyalist prisoners are usually held in separate areas. Wright was notoriously virulent in organizing pro-British death squad activities. He was linked to the killings of more than 40 people over the last 15 years, most of them Catholic civilians.

The night Wright was killed, Loyalist gunmen assaulted a dance hall in a Catholic-owned hotel in County Tyrone, killing Seamus Dillon, who was providing security against rightist attacks. The second retaliatory attack took place on New Year's Eve at the Clifton Tavern in North Belfast. Two paramilitary goons opened fire, killing Eddie Trainor and wounding five other patrons.

The LVF claimed responsibility for the killings. But William Hutchinson, leader of the pro-British Progressive Unionist Party, said he could not rule out the involvement

of its paramilitary, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The LVF split off from this larger terrorist outfit after the UVF officially declared a cease-fire in 1994 as part of the negotiations.

The Unionist forces — that is those who support the continued "union" of Northern Ireland with the United Kingdom — continue to fracture over how to respond to the gains registered by those fighting for a free, united Ireland in recent months.

On January 6 members of the Loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defense Association imprisoned at Long Kesh announced they would no longer support the negotiations on the future of Ireland, scheduled to resume January 12. Leaders of some of the main Unionist parties went to meet with them, but said they could not convince the prisoners to change this stance.

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams charged that these groups are trying to assert a "Unionist veto" over the peace process, and called on London's Northern Ireland secretary Marjorie Mowlam to take action to keep



Nationalist demonstrators throw fire bombs at cops and occupying British troops in Derry on December 13. British forces responded with 169 plastic bullets. The protests were sparked after the Royal Ulster Constabulary allowed rightist Apprentice Boys to march through the city center. London has used recent killings to resume army patrols in Northern Ireland.

the all-party talks from derailing. On January 7 Mowlam said she would go to Long Kesh to meet with the Loyalist inmates.

The British government has tried to give itself the veneer of neutrality, claiming the stepped up activity of its 17,500 troops in the six counties of Northern Ireland is sim-

ply aimed at halting "sectarian" violence between Protestant and Catholic groups.

In fact, the purpose of the British Army troops and pro-London RUC has been to enforce the partition of Ireland, promote the caste-like privileges awarded to Protestants, and terrorize the nationalist community — from the use of British troops against Nationalists in Derry's Battle of the Bogside in 1969, to the killing of 14 civil rights demonstrators on "Bloody Sunday" in 1972, through the most recent repression of nationalist protesters in Derry with plastic bullets Dec. 13, 1997.

On January 3 a court in London committed Róisín McAliskey for extradition to Germany. McAliskey faces frame-up charges of involvement in the bombing of a British Army barracks in Germany.

Over the last 14 months, her case has been a prominent focus of protests on behalf of Irish political prisoners. The court ruling frees British home secretary Jack Straw to make a final decision on the extradition request.

Meanwhile, supporters of the Irish freedom struggle continue to build a demonstration called for January 30 in Derry, Northern Ireland, to mark the 25th anniversary of Bloody Sunday and call for a new inquiry into the massacre.

A demonstration on the same theme is also planned for London January 24.

Electrical workers strike for union rights and respect in California

BY GALE SHANGOLD

LOS ANGELES — All 32 workers at Industrial Wire Products here are standing up to the company in a strike that began December 8. The strikers are members of United Electrical Workers (UE) Local 1422.

The company's so-called final offer includes a miserly five-cent wage increase for each year of the contract, eliminating one week of vacation for workers with 15 years or more seniority, 12-hour mandatory shifts at regular pay, and all grievances to be submitted in English, although 90 percent of the workers in the plant speak Spanish.

A majority of the workers are immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala with an average of 15 years in the plant. The average pay is \$9.30 an hour despite the fact that it is a relatively high-seniority workforce and the industry average is close to \$13.00 an hour.

Workers on the picket line frequently raised the questions of dignity and respect as a major factor in the strike.

"They expect one man to run two or three machines," said Jesús Cornejo. "They want us to work 12 hours a day with no overtime pay. One day I took my father home from the plant when he had heart problems and I was suspended. They treat us like slaves."

"I've worked at a lot of places but I've never seen anything like this before," said Raúl Calderón. They have no respect for the workers here. They give you 20 [disciplinary] points if you don't call in [to be excused from work] one hour before the shift starts."

Enio Hernández, a worker with 18 years' service in the plant, said, "The main issue in the strike is not money. The main issue in my mind is that the company now refuses

to process grievances in Spanish. Only English is allowed. On top of that they won't allow the shop stewards to file grievances — they have to be done by the individual workers themselves."

This is "a fight to unify the workers in the three plants owned by the same company," said Alejandro Molina Lara, the chief shop steward. "Two of the plants are organized by the UE and one by the Steelworkers and our contracts aren't the same. But the other two plants, in Pomona and Rancho Cucamonga, which are not on strike, are organizing solidarity." The company has shifted production to the other two plants but the only furnace continues to operate in the struck plant.

Currently about a half-dozen workers from a temporary agency and management personnel are attempting to keep one machine running. The picket lines have been strong, with most of the strikers showing up daily for duty. Daily informational meetings take place at the picket line.

The unionists point out that it took a strike as well as a U.S. Supreme Court decision to get the union recognized 15 years ago. Today they are fighting to keep their union intact.

Gale Shangold is a member of UNITE Local 482. Mark Friedman, Samuel Farley, and Craig Honts also contributed to this article.

Clinton probes cuts in Social Security

Continued from front page

Clinton announced a proposal to "adapt" Medicare — the government medical program for the elderly and disabled — to include U.S. citizens between the ages of 55 and 65.

There are 3 million uninsured people in this age group who are currently not eligible for Medicare or Medicaid, which provides health care for workers with extremely low incomes. They would be allowed to buy into the new Medicare program for \$3,600-\$5,000 a year. Clinton administration officials estimate that only 300,000 people will enroll in this plan if it is enacted.

To participate in this program, laid-off workers age 55 or older would pay \$400 a month for the health benefits. Medicare recipients between the ages of 62 and 64

would pay \$300 a month for coverage, and when they became eligible for full Medicare benefits at 65, they would have to pay \$10-\$20 a month above the usual premium for health services, which is now \$43.80 a month.

Clinton's Medicare "expansion" plan is presented as a measure to assist the estimated 41 million U.S. citizens who lack health insurance — including 10.5 million children.

The budget agreement Clinton signed into law last August was supposed to provide government funds to purchase medical insurance for 5 million low-income children, but congressional estimates put the figure for those who actually got coverage at about 500,000.

At the same time, that budget called for slashing \$115 billion cut from Medicare and chopping \$13 billion from Medicaid over five years.

More probes on Social Security

Among the rationales for not restoring some of the benefits that were slashed in the name of balancing the budget is the supposedly looming insolvency of the Social Security and Medicare trust funds.

Probing the possibility of another round of attacks, White House budget director Franklin Raines declared, "The job of dealing with Medicare and Social Security is now teed up for the political process."

According to the *Wall Street*

Journal, Clinton will "challenge" congress to "reform" the Social Security program when he delivers his State of the Union address in January. In response, Speaker of the House Newton Gingrich proposed January 5 that Congress establish a commission to study ways to gut the entitlement program.

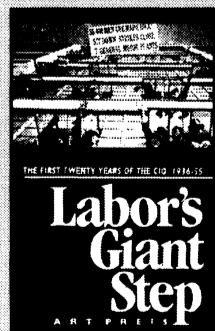
Clinton is considering calling a special session of Congress after the elections in November to discuss further measures to chip away Social Security benefits. The president's "budget-balancing" law established a 17-member bipartisan commission to study Medicare and recommend proposals for slicing benefits.

A previous commission was set up by Congress released a report in December, 1996 that claimed the U.S. government had been overstating inflation by 1.1 percent.

The commission, headed by Michael Boskin, an economics professor at Stanford University and former chief of the White House Council of Economic Affairs under President George Bush, called for Washington to revise the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The index is used to calculate cost-of-living adjustments for many union contracts, as well as for entitlements such as Social Security.

At the January 3 annual meeting of the American Economic Association and American Finance Association held in Chicago, Illinois, Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan repeated the claims made by the Boskin commission.

"Researchers at the Federal Reserve and elsewhere have come up with similar figures," he asserted, arguing for a "technical" adjustment. This adjustment would cost working people billions of dollars.



Labor's Giant Step The First Twenty Years of the CIO: 1936-55 Art Preis

The story of the explosive labor struggles and political battles in the 1930s that built the industrial unions. And how those unions became the vanguard of a mass social movement that began transforming U.S. society. **\$26.95**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write **Pathfinder**, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Tire strikers return to work at Goodyear

BY GARY BOYERS
AND TOM ALTER

NEW HAVEN, Indiana — Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 715 voted to accept a contract offer and return to work at the Michelin-owned Uniroyal Goodrich plant in nearby Woodburn in a vote here December 27. The vote ended a strike by 1,200 workers that began October 24.

While the contract was approved by a large majority of those voting, 806-95, most workers had mixed feelings about the settlement. Dave Wilkinson said, "I think we can do better, I think we got a contract that was take it or leave it," as he left the two-and-a-half hour meeting at New Haven High School. Local 715 member Thomas Schaper echoed these sentiments, saying, "What can you do? We just have to take it."

The bosses were forced to back down on one of the central issues in the strike, the company's demand to be able to unilaterally impose or change any work rule. Under the agreement the company must post any proposed rule change for 30 days. A union objection sends the issue to arbitration, and the change is put on hold, pending the arbitrator's ruling. Any new work rule implemented cannot be dropped or modified for 24 months.

On the other hand, the company won the right to make any job combinations it wants to. The union can grieve such combinations, but the job shifts will go into effect pending the grievance procedure. Management no longer will have to negotiate staffing levels for departments or work groups.

The Steelworkers pushed back Uniroyal proposals on discipline procedures and vacation scheduling, two contentious issues in the plant in the period leading up to the strike.

The company was able to establish a total break time of 70 minutes for workers on a 12-hour shift, a cut of 30 minutes for some people. The firing of Local 715 president Ray Wiseman will be left to a National Labor Relations Board hearing.

In early November Uniroyal announced that two production lines would be moved to other Michelin plants, eliminating 240 jobs in Woodburn.

They escalated their attack on December 6, when they said that the Indiana plant would be shut down if an agreement wasn't reached shortly.

Although the company had made the same threat in 1993 when the union was unsuccessfully resisting the imposition of 12-hour, rotating shifts, these threats had an effect on a layer of strikers *Militant* reporters

spoke to.

With the contract agreement, the company said it would keep the production of T/A tires for full-size pick-ups — the bigger line supposedly scheduled to be moved — in Woodburn.

Local 715 vice president Joe Motycka told the *Militant* that with the recent retirement of 40-45 workers, the job loss from the plant would be about 30-35.

Many Local 715 members were disappointed that the union wasn't able to win back the 8-hour work shift. A few workers blamed the French ownership of Michelin for the antiunion attacks by the company.

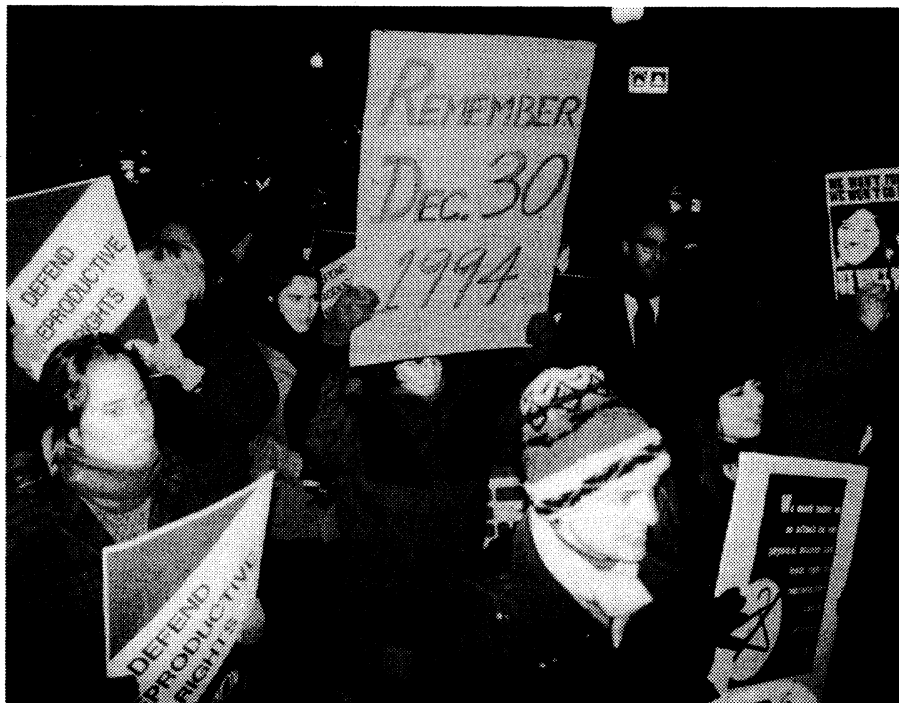
One worker was quoted in the Ft. Wayne *Journal-Gazette* saying "There's going to be a lot of us looking at every French person there wishing they had salt water running out their nose," meaning that Michelin management should cross the Atlantic and return to France.

Such expressions of American chauvinism were infrequent.

In a parallel vote with the three-year contract approval, Local 715 members voted to change their schedule so that workers change shifts every 16 weeks, rather than every four weeks.

Tom Alter is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa. Gary Boyers is a member of USWA Local 1299 in River Rouge, Michigan.

'For a woman's right to choose'



Militant/Margrethe Siem Shouting, "Not the church, not the state, women must decide their fate," 75 people marched from Boston City Hall to the State Capitol on the third anniversary of shootings at two abortion clinics. On Dec. 30, 1994, two clinic workers were killed and five others were wounded by antiabortion thug John Salvi. At the rally Cheryl Garrity, president of Massachusetts National Organization for Women, pointed to the importance of January 22 — the 25th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion. Andrea Lee from the Northeast Young Feminist Summit Organizing Committee urged participation in the February 27-March 1 conference in Boston. A regional planning meeting for all those who want to help organize the summit will be held January 24 in Boston. For more information, contact Boston NOW: (617) 232-1017.

Steelworkers in Pueblo end strike

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a closely contested vote December 30, steelworkers who have been on strike against CF&I Steel in Pueblo, Colorado, accepted a proposal from union officials to end their walkout and make an offer to the company to unconditionally return to work.

"After three hours of sometimes acrimonious debate," stated an article in the *Pueblo Chieftain*, union members voted 355-259 to end the strike. Picket lines were taken down that evening. Some 1,100 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) locals 2102 and 3267 went on strike against CF&I October 3.

The workers were demanding an end to forced overtime, the right to have a say in work assignments, increased wages, improvements in the pension plan, and health care benefits for retirees. Workers at the mill gave up \$35 million in wage and benefit con-

cessions after Oregon Steel bought the facility in 1993. This came on top of a \$50 million concessionary package prior to the takeover. This was the first steelworkers strike in Pueblo since 1959, when 8,000 workers walked out.

The company insists that the 600 scabs hired during the course of the strike, as well as 100 union members who crossed the line, would remain on the job and the strikers would be rehired "to the extent we have openings," according to company spokeswoman Vicki Taglifico.

She claimed that there would be less than 50 job openings available to the returning steelworkers. Union officials described the move to end the walkout as "not a surrender but a legal maneuver to increase pressure on Oregon Steel to settle the strike," according to an article in the December 31 *Pueblo Chieftain*. They say that the "corporate campaign" begun against Oregon Steel

would continue.

These actions have focused on demonstrations at offices of Wells Fargo Bank, the company's main lender, to urge investors to sell their stock.

The union officialdom is also hoping that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) will rule in its favor that the strike is over unfair labor practices, which could result in some back pay for striking workers and the dismissal of the replacement workers.

If the NLRB rules for the union, Oregon Steel could still take the case to federal appeals court, as it did in a similar dispute 14 years ago in Portland, Oregon.

Some of those cases are still in court. In the 1983 fight, Oregon Steel succeeded in breaking the union at its Portland mill.

Brian Williams is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2609 in Sparrows Point, Maryland.

Meatpackers' strike

Continued from front page

their seniority when they return to work. "When we sign the proposed contract it will mean no more seniority rights," said Cheralea Defreitas, a butcher for seven years.

Strikers at the Burlington plant have maintained round-the-clock pickets, including through the holidays. They explain that they've received visits of solidarity from workers at the Ford Oakville assembly plant, and Stelco Steel in Hamilton, as well as teachers who went on strike last fall to protest Bill 160, an education cutbacks bill.

In addition to the Burlington plant, almost 500 workers are locked out at the Maple Leaf plants in Hamilton, Ontario, and North Battleford, Saskatchewan.

Some 900 workers also continue to picket Maple Leaf's Edmonton, Alberta, plant, which was closed down by the company several weeks ago.

The Burlington plant is the most modern of the Maple Leaf facilities. It has the capacity to process 32,000 hogs a week. The company wants to drive down wages and radically restructure jobs and working conditions so that it can wrench bigger profits out of the meatpackers.

This includes cutting vacation time and docking workers' pay if they use more than 20 minutes of bathroom time each week. The company plans, once the strike is over, to add on another shift.

Debbie Bernaski, a laborer with 14 years on the job, told the *Militant*, "We used to get our boots and freezer coats covered and all benefits covered by the company. Now its 50 percent [of benefits] and only \$20 for freezer coats after six months."

Describing the speedup, Bernaski added, "They're giving us two days to adjust to a new job, and if not it's out. They used to give us six days."

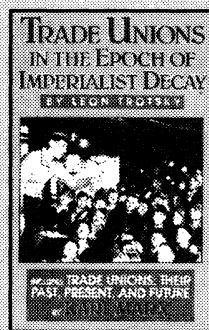
"We don't have jobs anymore. We used to have 37.5 hours [work] guaranteed; now it's zero," explained Cheralea Defreitas.

Maple Leaf Foods is striving to become one of the biggest hog processors in Canada. The food giant failed in its most recent bid to buy out pork competitor Schneiders.

Instead, Smithfield Foods, Inc., from Norfolk, Virginia, bought Schneiders.

Mick McDonald is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 5338, and the Young Socialists. Ned Dmytryshyn contributed to this article.

AVAILABLE FROM PATHFINDER



Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

Leon Trotsky
Featuring "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future" by Karl Marx

In this book, two central leaders of the modern communist workers movement outline the fight for this revolutionary perspective. \$14.95

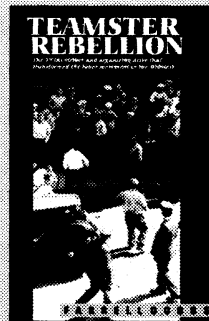
The Teamster Series

Lessons from the labor battles of the 1930s

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Teamster Rebellion

The 1934 strikes that built an industrial union and a fighting social movement in Minneapolis, recounted by a central leader of that battle. The first in a four-volume series on the Teamster-led strikes and organizing drives in the Midwest that helped pave the way for the CIO and pointed a road toward independent labor political action. \$16.95



Teamster Power

The growth and consolidation of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis and its class-struggle leadership, and the 11-state over-the-road organizing campaign that brought union power for the first time to many areas of the Midwest. \$17.95

Teamster Politics

How rank-and-file Teamsters led the fight against antiunion frame-ups and assaults by fascist goons; the battle for jobs for all; and efforts to advance independent labor political action. \$17.95

Teamster Bureaucracy

How the rank-and-file Teamsters leadership organized to oppose World War II, racism, and government efforts—backed by the international officialdom of the AFL, the CIO, and the Teamsters—to gag class-struggle-minded workers. \$18.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

France: thousands protest unemployment

Continued from front page
 offices in early December in the Marseille area, after it became clear that fewer unemployed would receive special year-end checks there to help them through the holiday season this year.

Protesters are demanding a special year-end bonus of 3000FF (6FF=1US\$) for all unemployed, an increase of 1500FF a month in the special payments for jobless workers who no longer receiving benefits, and access to the benefits called Minimum Insertion Revenue (RMI) for youth under 25, who are currently excluded from it.

RMI amounts to 2429FF a month for one person and 3644FF for a couple. More than 1 million people depend on it. Of the 3,114,000 unemployed in France — 12.4 percent of the active population — 80 percent receive less than 5,000FF per month. Nearly 37 percent have been jobless for over a year.

Socialist Party prime minister Lionel Jospin was elected on a pledge of addressing the problem of unemployment, which has hovered around 12 percent for the past two and a half years, with promises of creating 700,000 jobs and reducing the workweek to 35 hours.

The previous government of Alain Juppé had been rocked by working-class protests against the economic crisis and the regime's attempts to impose austerity measures.

Jospin met twice on January 6 with three top ministers in an attempt to defuse the crisis. Previous concessions announced January 2 — 3, an extra 500 million francs in aid and half-price public transportation fares for unemployed workers in the Paris area, did not stop the protests.

After granting the aid, Martine Aubry, minister for employment and solidarity, de-

manded an end to the occupations, warning that "nothing today justifies the continuation of these illegal actions."

The fight by unemployed has attracted other working-class fighters. Doro Traoré, a spokesperson for a group of undocumented immigrant workers, known as the Sans Papiers de Saint Bernard, told the crowd outside the national unemployment agency, "While immigrant workers are blamed for unemployment, the unemployed and undocumented are demonstrating together in the streets so they won't be able to divide us and pick us off one by one."

Other government ministers in the coalition government, worried about the broad support the protests enjoy among working people, have tried to defuse the crisis by posturing as supporters of the unemployed. Marie-George Buffet, minister of tourism and member of the French Communist Party (CP), christened the movement as "completely legitimate," stating that she "wasn't asking" the unemployed to end the occupations. Some of the organizers of the actions are CP members.

Green Party minister Dominique Voynet stated January 4 that "nothing in the measures announced by Martine Aubry has changed anything fundamental about these questions." She backtracked the next day, after a telephone call from the prime minister's office, and explained in a statement that "she wasn't criticizing these measures, which she totally supports."

Marseille remains the stronghold of the occupations. At the Bougainville unemployment office in Marseille's 15th district, unemployed workers barricaded all entrances with chairs, leaving the elevator as the only access, "because it can easily be shut down in case the police intervene," Hocine



French students converged on Paris in 1995-96 protesting against cuts in education. Youth have been in the forefront of the demonstrations for unemployment benefits.

Tachoukaft of the local CGT unemployed committee told the French daily *Le Monde*.

The national daily quoted another protester, Rachida, as saying angrily, "Martine

Aubry gives us a crumb while saying, 'Here, now calm down!', but it's a pittance. We're not asking for charity.... New Year's dinner was buttered pasta. We're fed up!"

Derek Jeffers is a member of the CGT at the GEC-Alsthom transformer factory in Saint Ouen. Claude Bléton and Young Socialists member Rafik Benali contributed to this article.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The 1960s Civil Rights Movement and the Vanguard Role of the Black Struggle. Speaker: Nelson Blackstock, an early activist in the southern civil rights movement, author of *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*. Plus film footage of the "Battle of Birmingham" and, on this anniversary of his birthday, Martin Luther King's speech against the Vietnam war. Fri., Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W.

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Struggle for Women's Liberation Today. Three classes on issues facing fighters in the struggle to defend women's rights. Sat., Jan. 10. **The Capitalist Political and Ideological Offensive against Women Today.** Sat., Jan. 17. **Women's Liberation and the Class Struggle.** Sat., Jan. 24. **Lessons of the Fight for Abortion Rights and for the Equal Rights Amendment.**

All classes at 4 p.m. to be held at 780 Tremont St. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Rally for Affirmative Action. Take a stand against Initiative 200, which would abolish affirmative action in Washington state. Fri., Jan. 16, 12 noon, Capitol building in Olympia. For more information about the rally and transportation to Olympia: e-mail olympia_rally@juno.com or call (206) 368-0832.

CORRECTIONS

The January 12 issue of the *Militant* incorrectly identified the photographer for the picture of Cuban workers in 1959 that appeared on page 7. That photograph should have been credited to the magazine *Bohemia*.

Another error appeared in the same issue in the article "Socialist workers, youth hold conference in Birmingham." The third full paragraph on page 8 should have stated that in the Spanish American war "U.S. troops invaded Cuba and seized Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam from its declining Spanish rival."

Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

NATO Troops Get Out of Yugoslavia Now! Speaker: Bob Stanton, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. (at 19th). Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

TEXAS

Houston

The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's March Toward War. Speaker: Meg Novak, Young Socialists National Committee. Sat., Jan 17, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 380. Donation: \$4. Tel: (713) 847-0704.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional* and *Ny International*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 111 21st St. South Zip 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079. Compuserve: 73712,3561

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Compuserve: 74642,326 **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255, 285-5323. Compuserve: 75604,556

FLORIDA: Miami: 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Compuserve: 103171,1674

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 803 Peachtree St. NE. Zip: 30308. Tel: (404) 724-9759. Compuserve: 104226,1245

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Zip: 60622. Tel: (773) 342-1780. Compuserve: 104077,511

IOWA: Des Moines: 2724 Douglas Ave. Zip: 50310. Tel: (515) 277-4600. Compuserve: 104107,1412

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 780 Tremont St. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772. Compuserve: 103426,3430

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 7414 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Compuserve: 104127,3505 Tel: (313) 875-0100.

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 2490 University Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55114. Tel: (612) 644-6325. Compuserve: 103014,3261

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 87A Halsey.

from Pathfinder
Europe & America:
Two Speeches on Imperialism
 by Leon Trotsky
 In two speeches in the mid-1920s, Trotsky points to the emergence of the United States as the primary economic power in the world—alongside the decline of Britain, France, and Germany—as the decisive factor in world politics. He highlights the revolutionary prospects for the working class of the world.
\$6.00
Leon Trotsky on France
\$21.95
 Available from bookstores, including those listed on this page, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Mailing address: 909 Broad St., Suite 320. Zip: 07102. Tel: (973) 643-3341. Compuserve: 104216,2703

NEW YORK: New York City: 59 4th Avenue (corner of Bergen) Brooklyn, NY Zip: 11217. Tel: (718) 399-7257. Compuserve: 102064,2642 ; 167 Charles St., Manhattan, NY. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

OHIO: Cincinnati: P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 662-1931. **Cleveland:** 1832 Euclid. Zip: 44115. Tel: (216) 861-6150. Compuserve: 103253,1111

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8218. Compuserve: 104502,1757 **Pittsburgh:** 1103 E. Carson St. Zip 15203. Tel: (412) 381-9785. Compuserve: 103122,720

TEXAS: Houston: 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 380. Zip: 77087. Tel: (713) 847-0704. Compuserve: 102527,2271

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 1930 18th St. N.W. Suite #3 (Entrance on Florida Ave.) Zip: 20009. Tel: (202) 387-2185. Compuserve: 75407,3345.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Compuserve: 74461,2544.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 19 Terry St., Surry Hills 2010. Mailing address: P.O. Box K879, Haymarket Post Office, NSW 1240. Tel: 02-9281-3297. Compuserve: 106450,2216

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 0171-928-7993. Compuserve:

The Power of Our Voices

A NORTHEAST
 YOUNG FEMINIST SUMMIT
 Boston, Massachusetts
 February 27 — March 1, 1998
 Royal Sonesta Hotel

Sponsored by the Northeast Region of the National Organization for Women (NOW)

Also join in:

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE COMMEMORATION

Thursday, January 22, 1998
 NOW teams up with Coalition for Choice for this event

101515,2702

Manchester: Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 0161-839-1766. Compuserve: 106462,327

CANADA

Montreal: 4581 Saint-Denis. Postal code: H2J 2L4. Tel: (514) 284-7369. Compuserve: 104614,2606

Toronto: 851 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M3. Tel: (416) 533-4324. Compuserve: 103474,13

Vancouver: 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343. Compuserve: 103430,1552

FRANCE

Paris: MBE 201, 208 rue de la Convention. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (1) 47-26-58-21. Compuserve: 73504,442

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klappartíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. INTERNET: gphssg@treknet.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075. Compuserve: 100035,3205

Christchurch: 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

Spring house cleaning — During the war in Yugoslavia, U.S. drug companies donated some 34,000 tons of medicines, of which half



Harry Ring

were unusable. Some had unreadable labels, and the shelf life of others had expired. (Some of the stuff dated back to World War II.) Dump-

ing medical waste in the USA costs \$2,000 a ton. Plus, notes the *New England Journal of Medicine*, they probably got tax deductions for their "donations."

Petty larceny doesn't pay — In Vermont, shoplifting more than \$100 worth is a felony, with a sentence of up to 10 years. A misdemeanor sentence is at most six months.

In Rutland, a woman was busted for lifting about \$100 worth. The defense pointed out that several of the items were on sale that day, bringing the total to \$97.37. The

cops responded that to get the discount you have to show a store courtesy card at the checkout, which the defendant didn't.

They're so clever — It was disclosed that in 1995 the Clinton White House asked the CIA for confidential information about several U.S. citizens. A National Security Council staffer explained that while it's illegal, in most cases, for the CIA to spy on citizens, it's not illegal for the White House to ask it for such info.

Sounds reasonable — Sociology professor Michael Radelet led

a massive study, going back to the turn of the century, which found 416 cases in which the death penalty was wrongly imposed. Declared Radelet: "We have no idea how much of the iceberg we've uncovered, but I'm pretty confident we've just skimmed the surface."

What else is new? — For years, British insurance companies have been expected to pay for National Health Service treatment of road accident victims, but hospitals rarely collect. Pending legislation is intended to correct this. The insurance companies response? They'll have

to jack up car insurance premiums.

...meanwhile — To pay the cost of maintaining police cameras that assertively nab speeders, £10 (about \$15) will be added to speeding fines.

Thought for the week — "Puerto Ricans on a per capita basis have shed more blood and sustained more casualties than any one of the 50 United States." — Marine Corps Gen. Charles Wilhelm, chief of the new headquarters of the Pentagon's Southern Command, recently relocated from the Panama Canal Zone to Puerto Rico.

Panama's resistance to U.S. imperialism

Below we reprint an excerpt from "Why the Panamanian people are fighting for national dignity," by Cindy Jaquith, which is found in the pamphlet, *Panama: The truth about the U.S. invasion*. It is copyright © 1990 by Pathfinder Press and reprinted by permission.

BY CINDY JAQUITH

"General Thurman, with the way things are going, don't you think it's optimistic to say U.S. troops will be out of Panama in one month?"

Ted Koppel, ABC Nightline

"Well, you'll recall when we went into Detroit. We said it would be for ten days and then it took us a while."

Gen. Maxwell Thurman
Head of U.S. Southern Command
Panama, December 22, 1989

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Three days into the U.S. invasion of Panama — Washington's biggest military operation since the Vietnam War — Gen. Maxwell Thurman could think only of Detroit, where 4,700 U.S. paratroopers and 8,000 National Guardsmen invaded in 1967 to crush a rebellion by Blacks against police brutality.

The U.S. Army's occupation of Detroit left 43 Blacks dead, 2,000 wounded, 5,000 arrested, and 5,000 homeless.

The invasion of Panama by 26,000 U.S. troops has taken thousands of Panamanian lives and left thousands more homeless and wounded. Body bags of U.S. GIs have arrived in the United States, along with hundreds of wounded U.S. troops.

Washington says it has occupied this country of only 2.3 million people to "restore democracy." But the bombing of working-class neighborhoods in Panama City, the refusal to permit Red Cross workers to evacuate the wounded, and the rounding up of thousands of Panamanian youth reveal the real target of this operation.

The invading troops have met resistance from the Dignity Battalions. These are armed civilian units of Panamanian workers and peasants, many of them Black. The battalions have been branded "terrorists," "thugs," and "looters" by the likes of General Thurman. Cuban President Fidel Castro has praised them as "heroes of Our America who are fighting for the dignity, honor, and sovereignty of our peoples."...

The battle of the Panamanian people for freedom from U.S. tyranny stretches back to the beginning of this century. In 1903 the United States intervened in Panama to gain for itself rights to build the Panama Canal. A treaty was drawn up giving the U.S. government rights to the canal "in perpetuity," including the right to administer the over-500-square-mile Canal Zone, to run the Panama Canal Co., and to use U.S. soldiers to maintain "order" in other parts of Panama. Washington didn't even bother to ask the Panamanian government, which it had just installed, to sign the document.

Tens of thousands of workers from the Caribbean, most of them Black and English-speaking, migrated to Panama to work on the canal. Thousands died from the slavish working conditions or from disease. Of those who survived, many stayed in the Canal Zone working for the U.S. Army or private U.S. companies once the canal was completed.

The decades following completion of the canal were marked by repeated struggles of Panamanians against U.S. domination of their economy and government and for an end to the occupation of the Canal Zone. Intertwined with the fight for Panamanian sovereignty was the struggle against the racist policies of the U.S. government. In the Canal Zone, which was subject to U.S. law, Washington had set up the same kind of Jim Crow system that existed at that time in the U.S. South.

Whites shopped at "gold" commissaries and lived in "gold" neighborhoods, while Blacks went to "silver" commissaries, drank out of "silver" water fountains, and could only find housing in "silver" neighborhoods.

The struggle against this discriminationary system was waged partly through the trade unions that grew up among canal workers. Many of the labor leaders who fought to end segregation were expelled from the zone....

The legal segregationist system in the zone began to fall apart, however, in the 1950s. With the first victories in the U.S. civil rights movement against "separate but equal" facilities, certain U.S. policies in the Canal Zone were no longer constitutional.

In 1959 the people of Cuba overthrew the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship, ending decades of U.S. domination. Working people throughout Latin America were inspired by the new Cuban government's resolute action to distribute land to poor peasants, nationalize U.S.-owned companies, drive out the gambling and prostitution houses, and defend the revolution arms in hand.

Labor and youth struggles in Panama, as in many other Latin American countries, began to intensify following the Cuban victory. Sugar and banana workers in Panama spearheaded a battle for a minimum wage in the early 1960s. There were urban protests against high rents. Panamanian students organized demonstrations against the U.S. occupation of the zone.

In 1964, U.S. students and parents refused to allow Panama's flag to be raised next to the U.S. one at Balboa High School in the zone. When a group of Panamanian students attempted to do so, they were attacked and the Panamanian flag was desecrated. Zone police and U.S. troops then opened fire on the crowd, setting off rebellions in the zone, Panama City, and Colón.

More than 20 Panamanians were shot dead and over 400 wounded. The bulk of the protesters were slain in Chorrillo, one of the poorest working-class neighborhoods in Panama City.

Twenty-five years later, when the U.S. military invaded on December 20, 1989,



Students, unionists, and others in Panama have for a century protested U.S. imperialism in their country. Above, a demonstration in Panama, 1959.

Chorrillo was the first neighborhood to be destroyed as U.S. bombers pounded the Defense Forces headquarters located in the heart of Chorrillo....

In 1967 Washington offered the Panamanian government a new canal treaty aimed at maintaining the U.S. presence with some cosmetic changes. Opposition to the treaty was so great that Panama's National Assembly was unable to ratify it.

The political crisis deepened with the 1968 presidential elections. Arnulfo Arias declared himself the winner, but eleven days after taking office, he was overthrown by a group of young officers in the country's National Guard led by Omar Torrijos, then a colonel....

In 1977 U.S. President James Carter was forced to sign historic treaties promising to relinquish Washington's control of the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000. The Torrijos-Carter treaties stipulated that

total control of the canal and the administration of the zone would revert to Panama. The U.S. military bases — which numbered fourteen at the time — would be dismantled. Between 1977 and 2000, control would be turned over step-by-step to the Panamanian government.

On October 1, 1979, a quarter of a million Panamanians demonstrated to celebrate the formal turning over of the Canal Zone to Panama. U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale, who addressed the ceremony, was greeted by banners demanding "Yankees out of Panama!" and "Sovereignty or death!"...

In the fall of 1989 Washington made its last attempt to use Panamanians to overturn the legitimate government of Panama....

Two and a half months later, the biggest U.S. invading force since Vietnam attacked a country whose working people have fought long and hard for national dignity and self-determination.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 19, 1973

The U.S. government is attempting to hide from the American people, and the people of the world, the horrible effects of the December bombing campaign of Hanoi and Haiphong.

The Pentagon has refused to make public an official report describing the extent of the raids and damage they caused.

On Jan. 4 the North Vietnamese government released a preliminary survey of the death and destruction in Hanoi. It stated that 40,000 tons of bombs were dropped by U.S. planes on Hanoi alone in the 10 days beginning Dec. 18; killing 1,318 people and wounding 1,261.

Social, economic, educational, and cultural establishments were bombed in 353 places, some of them as many as 10 times.

The number of homeless has not yet been announced, but a total of 5,000 houses and other buildings were destroyed in Hanoi.

The Jan. 8 *Time* magazine described signs of bitterness in Hanoi over the bombings: "Here and there on a wall, someone scrawled, 'Nixon, you will pay this blood debt,' and 'We will avenge our compatriots massacred by the Americans.'"

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

January 19, 1948

Seventy-nine cents of every dollar the American people will shell out for Truman's proposed 1949 budget of \$39,669,000,000 (that's billions) will go for war — past, present and future. Six times more will be spent for war preparations than for human needs. Direct military expenditures alone will cost \$11,025,000,000 — 28% of the total. The Social Welfare, Health and Security program will take \$2,028,000,000 — one-third less in 1940.

Almost 17 times as much will be spent for developing the atom bomb (\$674,000,000 under the heading "Natural resources not primarily agriculture") as for long-range public housing (\$40 million).

In addition to direct military outlays, Truman proposes to spend \$7,009,000,000 to bolster capitalist dictatorships and military machines in Europe, Asia and Latin America — under the heading of "international affairs" and "foreign relief." Another major war cost will be the payment of \$5,250,000,000 of interest on public debt — mostly to bankers and corporations for war loans and on interest-bearing government bonds.

from Pathfinder

Panama: The Truth about the U.S. Invasion
Cindy Jaquith, Don Rojas, Nils Castro, and Fidel Castro
\$3.50

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Behind the Mexico massacre

The pre-Christmas massacre of dozens of peasants in Chiapas, Mexico, by pro-landlord thugs shows the true face of capitalism today and what it offers humanity tomorrow.

U.S. president William Clinton hypocritically deplored the killing as a "violation of the most basic human values" while praising the capitalist government of Mexico, whose ruling party was responsible for the crime.

Meanwhile, Washington is stepping up its military intervention in Mexico under the guise of fighting drug trafficking — through CIA training of Mexican special troops and providing military helicopters — to try to keep workers and peasants in check.

Workers should not be fooled by the U.S. rulers' occasional campaign around "democracy" in Mexico. When the billionaires talk about democracy, we should ask: Democracy for whom? For which class? They really mean keeping the world safe for the capitalists. In fact, as the class struggle and polarization heats up, Washington needs a stronger, more authoritarian regime in Mexico to try to guard its profit interests.

For decades, foreign and domestic landlords have sponsored death squads and terrorized Indians and other rural toilers in southern Mexico — with not a peep from big-business spokespeople. It's only when the struggles by peasants and workers in Chiapas exploded that they got the attention of "civilized" society.

The December 22 slaughter in Chiapas is simply one of the brutal consequences of the capitalist economic and social crisis in Mexico. Since the U.S.-engineered "bail-out" imposed on Mexico after the December 1994 collapse of the peso, U.S. capitalist investors and some Mexican capitalists have recovered from the worst of the crisis. But the results have been devastating for Mexican working people: slashed social programs, lower real wages, higher unemployment. Peasants continue to be driven off the land and into the ranks of the agricultural and urban working class. Meanwhile, Yankee and other foreign capitalists have grabbed bigger pieces of the country's national patrimony. The stepped-up repression is an effort by the wealthy rulers to stem the inevitable growth of resistance to this economic disaster.

As U.S. imperialists sink their tentacles further into social powderkegs around the world such as Mexico, however, more explosions are guaranteed. The capitalist system itself, by its own workings, is the world's number one subversive force: it fosters conditions that produce more workers — more soldiers for the army of labor — and that push working people into fighting for our own class interests. For working-class militants the world over, this is the time to steadily organize, recruit, prepare, and fight — to build a movement of millions that can wrest state power from the propertied minority and place it in the hands of workers and farmers.

Socialists say: 'jail killer cops!'

The following statement was issued January 5 by the Detroit branch of the Socialist Workers Party.

Supporters of democratic and civil rights should protest the release of Larry Nevers and Walter Budzyn. Working people throughout this city should organize a resounding No! to the judicial rulings that put these killer cops back on the streets. Separate juries found both police officers guilty. They were serving jail sentences for the 1992 murder of Malice Green. That was a victory for democratic rights.

Today, a mere four years later, the courts have overturned the convictions and released both former cops from prison. In fact, U.S. district judge Lawrence Zatkoff's December 30 ruling, on Nevers routine writ of habeas appeal, follows a Michigan Supreme Court decision that granted Budzyn an early release and a new trial five months ago. The courts' arguments are similar.

Like the supreme court, Zatkoff claims that the atmosphere in Detroit was too charged; that the trial jurors were overly influenced by both the movie *Malcolm X* and Nevers's participation in the undercover activities of STRESS (Stop Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets), which was

responsible for the killing of 20 people in the early 1970s. These judicial decisions do not concern themselves about the guilt or innocence of Nevers and Budzyn, his partner in the crime. Rather, the rulings act to guarantee that "their constitutional rights to a fair trial are protected."

The courts thus conclude that Malice Green, an unemployed Black steelworker, had no right to resist search and seizure when these cops stopped him on a public street. His constitutional, civil, and human rights provided no protection from the police flashlights that beat him to death with repeated blows to his face and head.

While the bosses regard cops like Nevers and Budzyn as soldiers in their never ending war against working people at home — especially those who are Black — many working people see these thugs with guns as judge, jury and executioners. The higher courts have drastically limited prisoners' rights. Nevers's writ, however, unlike the one in 100 normally reviewed, received accelerated treatment to render a favorable ruling.

At the upcoming trials for Walter Budzyn and Larry Nevers, working people should organize to demonstrate our rejection of the courts' rulings. Justice demands that these cops be jailed.

Global warming is not proven, but there's reason enough to fight capitalism

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — In his letter to the editor Jerry Gardner asserts that it has been scientifically established that global warming has already begun. I remain unconvinced that this has been proven.

It's indisputable that the accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere has increased in the past two centuries. Systematic measurements begun in 1957 have recorded this trend, and analysis of air bubbles in glacial ice in Antarctica and Greenland confirm that this rise began around 1800 with the onset of the industrial revolution.

But a debate is still taking place among scientists on

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

what level of concentration, if any, of "greenhouse gases" can spark a warming trend. They also disagree as to whether the current accumulation is sufficient to do so, and whether it has already begun. A recent declaration issued in Leipzig by some 100 scientists questioning whether global warming has begun is testimony to the continuing debate.

The principal evidence that warming has begun is a rise in the average worldwide land-based temperature in the past 100 years by one degree. But it has yet to be proved that this is the direct result of CO₂ accumulation, and not the natural recovery from a short cooling period of about 400 years. The Earth has been in an overall warm-up since the last ice age reached its peak about 15,000 years ago — a period punctuated by cooler periods of hundreds of years. Temperature records for 100 years are based on too short a time period to definitely say that a new direction has begun. I'm not persuaded that a heat wave one summer in India and the U.S. Midwest proves anything.

Some scientists predict that based on what we know of previous ice age cycles (and there is no accepted consensus for the cause of ice ages), we're soon headed toward another era of cooling. If, so, what effect would this have on a potential "greenhouse effect?" The Earth's climate is affected by a wider range of factors than glassed-in greenhouses, including the movement of ocean currents that are only beginning to be understood.

Right now we have conflicting computer models of what might happen if CO₂ buildup continues. That accelerated global warming *might* happen should be sufficient proof that working people need to overturn capitalist rule and replace it with a government of our own that will protect the environment from pollution and safeguard the Earth's ecosystem.

— DOUG JENNESS

FROM PATHFINDER SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF JAMES P. CANNON

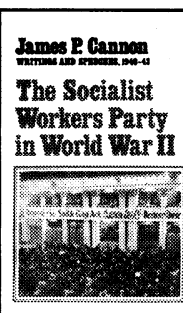
The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

In this companion Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*, Cannon and other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party defend the political and organizational principles of Marxism against a petty bourgeois current in the party. The debate unfolded as Washington prepared to drag U.S. working people into the slaughter of World War II. **\$19.95**

Speeches to the Party

The Revolutionary Perspective and the Revolutionary Party

Writing in the early 1950s, Cannon discusses how a proletarian party can resist the conservatizing pressures of the emerging capitalist expansion and anticommunist witch-hunt. He discusses Washington's failure to achieve its goals in the Korean War, why the rulers reined in McCarthyism, and how class-conscious workers under these conditions carried out effective union work and political activity to build a communist workers party. **\$21.95**



The Socialist Workers Party in World War II

Writings and Speeches, 1940-43

Preparing the communist workers movement in the United States to campaign against wartime censorship, repression, and antiunion assaults. **\$22.95**

The Struggle for Socialism in the "American Century"

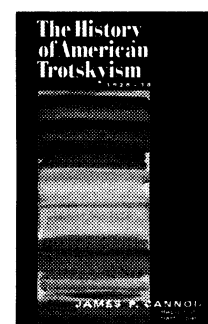
Writings and Speeches, 1945-47

The challenges posed by the post-World War II labor upsurge, the rapid expansion of openings for the communist movement, and the subsequent ebb in face of the stabilization of U.S. capitalism and the employers' antilabor offensive and witch-hunt. **\$22.95**

The History of American Trotskyism

Report of a Participant, 1928-38

"Trotskyism is not a new movement, a new doctrine," Cannon says, "but the restoration, the revival of genuine Marxism as it was expounded and practiced in the Russian revolution and in the early days of the Communist International." In this series of twelve talks given in 1942, James P. Cannon recounts an important chapter in the efforts to build a proletarian party in the United States. **\$18.95**



Socialism on Trial

The basic ideas of socialism, explained in testimony during the frame-up trial of 18 leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters union and the Socialist Workers Party charged with sedition during World War II. **\$15.95**

AVAILABLE FROM BOOKSTORES, INCLUDING THOSE LISTED ON PAGE 12, OR WRITE PATHFINDER, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014. TEL: (212) 741-0690. FAX: (212) 727-0150. WHEN ORDERING BY MAIL, PLEASE INCLUDE \$3 TO COVER SHIPPING AND HANDLING.

U.S. judge orders Havana to pay 'damages' for 1996 shootdown of rightists

BY ANGEL LARISCY

MIAMI — A federal judge in Miami ruled December 17 that the Cuban government is liable for paying \$187.6 million to families of members of Brothers to the Rescue who were shot down by the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces while invading Cuban airspace in February 1996. Brothers to the Rescue is a Florida-based group led by Cuban-American counterrevolutionaries, many of who have long histories of armed action against the Cuban government dating back to the failed April 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion organized by the CIA. This outfit, which claims that its primary purpose is to conduct flights to look for rafters who have left Cuba and are heading to Florida, publicly acknowledged that on three occasions — in July 1995 and twice in January 1996 — it organized flights directly over the Havana area to scatter leaflets from the air.

The Cuban government noted that on Feb. 24, 1996, the planes were shot down after coming within between five and eight miles of Cuba's coast, and being warned once against violating Cuban airspace. Cuban officials added that the nation had faced 10 other violations of its airspace in the 20 months prior to these incidents.

Washington used the downing of the planes as a pretext to intensify the embargo against Cuba's socialist revolution. Within days of the event, President William Clinton announced his support for the misnamed Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity bill, also known as the Helms-Burton bill. The law tightened the embargo of the island, closed U.S. ports to ships that have docked in Cuba within six months, and further restricted the rights of U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba. The bill was passed into law on March 12, 1996. "The Cuban government fully assumes the responsibility of the patriotic action carried out in legitimate defense of the sovereignty and security of our country," Cuba's foreign minister Roberto Robaina declared on March 6, 1996, before a special session of the United Nations General Assembly. "We exercise the same sovereign right of all states to defend the territorial integrity of our country, its sovereignty, and the peace of our citizens."

The ruling on damages here was carried out under the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, which allows U.S. citizens or their relatives to take legal action against a country if they are the vic-

tims of an "act of terrorism" sponsored by that country's government. It was the first time that a federal judge has found a foreign nation liable for a supposedly terrorist act under the law. Senior U.S. district judge James Lawrence King called the shooting of the two planes by the Cuban air force an "outrageous contempt for international law" and "callous murders," and collectively awarded the families of Armando Alejandro, Carlos Alberto Costa, Marios Manuel de la Peña \$49.9 million in compensatory damages, as well as \$137.7 million in punitive damages. The fourth pilot killed, Pablo Morales, was not a U.S. citizen, so his family was not eligible to file suit.

From the beginning of the trial, Cuba has refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the court. The court declared Havana to be in default and allowed the trial to continue. Throughout the proceedings efforts were made to slander the Cuban government and brand it as an outlaw state. Stephen Schnably, a University of Miami international law professor testified, "Cuba is certainly obligated by human rights treaties to respect the right to life." Charles Leonard, a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator and Air Force fighter pilot claimed in his testimony that "at no time were these aircraft in Cuban territorial airspace." The *Miami Herald* asserted during

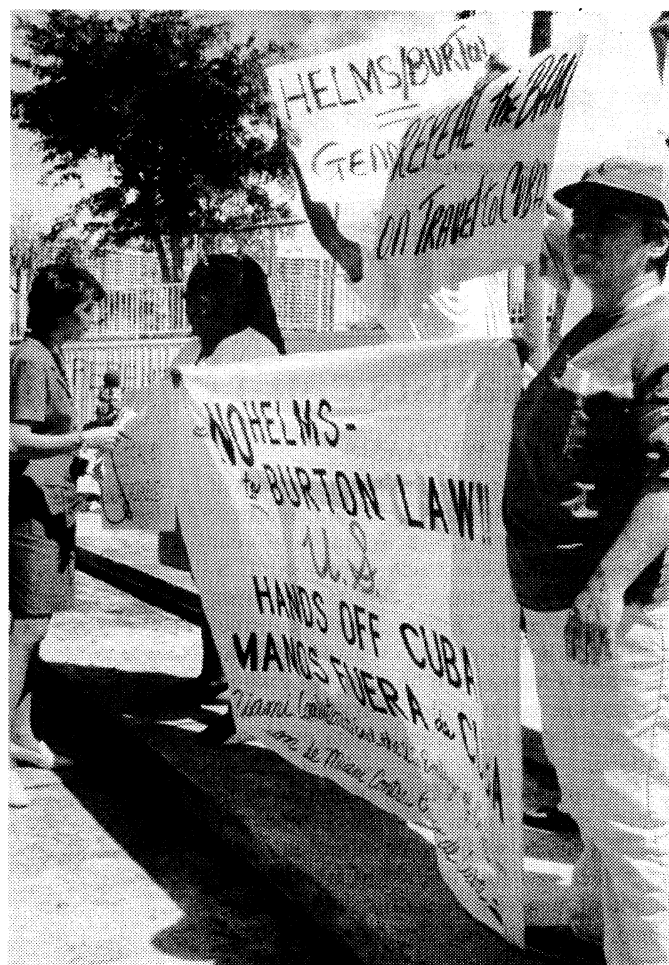
its coverage of the trial that the planes were shot down "without warning."

In an editorial the *Miami Herald* called the verdict in this rigged trial "a stunning moral victory." A White House official noted that the the that the ruling "has ramifications well beyond Cuba — there is a need to consider the implications for Syria, Iran and Libya."

The day after the judgment was announced, Alejandro González, a spokesman for Cuba's foreign ministry, declared, "The supposed conclusions of the judge are illegitimate, are contrary to international law. And Cuba, of course, does not feel any obligation" to comply.

Speaking at a weekly foreign ministry news conference, González noted, "This court proceeding was orchestrated by sectors hostile to Cuba."

The families have announced they will try to collect the punitive damages awarded to



Militant/Janet Post
Demonstration in Miami March 16, 1996, protesting moves by Washington to tighten embargo against Cuba.

them from some \$148 million in Cuban assets that Washington has held frozen in U.S. accounts following the expropriation of U.S. capitalist holdings on the island in 1960. President William Clinton distributed \$300,000 to each of the four families from these assets last year.

Miami group tied to latest plot to kill Castro

BY JANET POST

MIAMI — On December 21 the *Miami Herald* reported that a rifle used in a suspected assassination plan against Cuban president Fidel Castro in November had been purchased by Francisco Hernández, the president of the ultraright Cuban American National Foundation (CANF).

A U.S. grand jury in San Juan, Puerto Rico, is currently investigating the assassination plot, which allegedly involved four Cuban-Americans who intended to sail to Margarita Island, off Venezuela, where Castro attended the seventh Ibero-American Summit beginning November 7.

On October 27 the rightists called the U.S. Coast Guard after a mechanical failure on their yacht caused it to take on water. Some of the group claimed they were on a fishing trip, but instead of fishing gear, Coast

Guardsmen found two Barrett .50-caliber semiautomatic rifles worth almost \$7,000 each, military fatigues, night vision goggles, a satellite telephone, and portable radios.

The four were arrested on weapons charges and freed on bond after a week. According to a U.S. Customs investigator, one of them, Angel Alfonso Aleman, an administrator at a textile factory in Union City, New Jersey, "started yelling that the weapons were his" during questioning.

According to the *Miami Herald*, "Alfonso went on the say that he had hidden the weapons aboard the yacht for an attempt to kill Castro at the Ibero-American Summit."

"He was also quoted as saying his only mission in life was to assassinate Castro," a U.S. Customs investigator testified, according to the *Herald*. At later hearings Alfonso denied making the statements. His defense

lawyer suggested that federal agents were lying. The *Herald* reported that one of the rifles was purchased in 1994 by CANF president Hernández and the second by a veteran of the U.S.-organized Bay of Pigs invasion, Juan Evelio Pou. The newspaper added, "Although the Havana government has repeatedly accused CANF and its members of financing armed attacks on Cuba, this is the first time a CANF official has been linked to an FBI investigation of an alleged plot against Cuba."

Hernández gave secret testimony before the San Juan grand jury November 19. The yacht, *La Esperanza*, is owned by Jose Antonio Llama, a member of the CANF Executive Committee who refuses to testify.

Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368.

LETTERS

On global warming

In his otherwise excellent article on the Kyoto conference, Doug Jenness uses the phrase "gasses that can cause a greenhouse effect that might lead to climatic warming." It would be more accurate to say gasses that are causing climate change and global warming.

There is no longer a serious debate about whether or not greenhouse gasses are causing climate change. Current discussion centers around how fast it will happen and how bad will it be. The only "scientists" who dispute the greenhouse effect are those lackeys of the highly organized and well-financed oil industry and their supporters. The fact that a significant number of people still think climate change is in doubt is a measure of the oil industries success.

The planet is entering a period of permanent climatic crisis that will only be worsened by the inequalities and inability to plan that is endemic to capitalism. Capitalism cannot begin to deal with the problem of climate change in any rational, humane way. Consider three of thousands of examples: (1) In 1995 a section of ice the size of Rhode Island broke off the Larson Ice shelf, ending its 20,000 year existence. (2) The *Aedes aegypti* mos-

quito, which carries dengue and yellow fever, has been generally unable to survive above 1000 meters, due to the cold. Recently it has been reported at 1240 meters in Costa Rica and 2,200 meters in Columbia, and at high elevations in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. (3) During the summer of 1995 hundreds of people, mainly elderly and poor, died during heat waves in Chicago and India.

The possibility of greatly reducing the flow of greenhouse gasses exists now, as proven technology. We do not need to wait for new inventions or discoveries. What is needed to stem the flow of greenhouse gasses and thus limit climate change is a complete reorganization of production and a move away from fossil fuels. This will not be accomplished short of a socialist revolution. A revolution that will, among other things, make existing technology available to anyone who needs it, without regard for profit.

When the Kyoto treaty comes up for adoption in the United States, we can expect another flurry of false information and economic nationalism. The *Militant* owes it to its readers to keep abreast of these developments.

Jerry Gardner
Richmond, California

Against land mines

The recent articles and editorials praising land mines (e.g., "For Land Mines, Against Ottawa," Dec. 22 issue) have blithely ignored the fact that most victims of this weapon are poor people in countries like Angola and Cambodia that have been harshly exploited by imperialism. At one time in the late 1980s, the manufacture of prosthetic limbs was the largest industry in Angola, a sad confirmation of this. The impoverishment of many countries in the underdeveloped world is exacerbated by mines, which render arable land unusable. According to one source, the land available for agriculture and livestock in Afghanistan would be increased by 88 percent without the presence of mines. Other necessities of life for working people — such as shipment of medical supplies and food — are disrupted by mines as well.

While you correctly expose the hypocrisy and duplicity of the big war-makers who tout the recent land mine agreement, you go overboard in unthinkingly echoing the remarks of Cuban general Rosside about land mines being "the weapon of the poor." Many amputees in southern Africa and southeast Asia would beg to differ. Any military strategist, the Cuban general included, would

be bemused and/or horrified by your ignorance about the place of land mines in struggles of the oppressed.

Nina Gerson
Charlottesville, Virginia

Revolutionary warrior

I am inquiring about receiving a subscription to your newspaper. I am a Shiite Muslim of Islam, a revolutionary warrior, and a man. Some people have also labeled me a radical because I will not accept oppression and genocide of my people, people of color. I am Spanish-Sicilian and Mayan Indian. I have been placed in Administrative Segregation Security Detention because I refuse to bow down, to give up on my people, myself, my histories, and I keep my self dignity intact. Plus I teach the people around me the truth. I take off the blinders as they were taken off of me!

I would rather die a Revolutionary Warrior, than die less than a true man equal to all men. I am a prisoner in the Texas Dept. Of Criminal Injustice System. I would like to ask that this be printed in your newspaper, so that I and my organization known as "The Free Men of Incarceration" may start and maintain contact with other people of our ideals and beliefs as Revolutionary

Warriors. All mail will be answered immediately by myself or another member of our organization. I would like to know if any donation of books, literature, pamphlets, etc. are available.

We wish you and all our brethren well in our struggles as Revolutionary Warriors. Don't forget about us on the insides of these walls.

A prisoner
New Boston, Texas

Pass the 'Militant' to others

I am a prisoner in the Special Housing Unit and have been now for three years and seven months. Can you please send me a few of your back issues so I can keep up on current events as well as broaden my knowledge on things? After reading the newspapers I will pass them to other prisoners here with me in the Special Housing Unit.

A prisoner
Pine City, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

'Bailouts' fail to halt crisis in Asia

Imperialists can't collect loan payments as workers protest austerity measures

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"Asia was supposed to be the continent of miracles in the 90s," lamented an article in the *New York Times* as the new year opened. Instead, the article continued, U.S. capitalists face "market disaster hovering across the Pacific." Jeffrey Schafer, a former Clinton administration Treasury official, said that if he was still on the job, "I would be staying up at night worrying about a major meltdown of banks in Asia, especially in Japan."

For millions of working people in south Korea and other countries, the currency crisis that began with the devaluation of the Thai baht last July has led to layoffs, government austerity measures, and other attacks on their living standards. It is being used by capitalists in the imperialist centers to deepen their control in the region. At the same time, both right-wing and liberal politicians in Washington have stepped up their nationalist rhetoric in a debate over funding "bailout" schemes in south Korea and elsewhere in Asia.

Indonesian president Suharto announced a draft 1998 budget January 6 that fell short of meeting the conditions stipulated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in exchange for a \$38 billion "rescue" loan package. The budget projects increasing government spending over the next year, and doesn't include as deep austerity measures as the U.S.-led imperialist lending institution had demanded. The same day the government of Thailand announced it would ask the IMF to ease the conditions set for a "bailout" in that country.

The editors of the London-based *Financial Times* opined January 7 that the Indonesian government's "failure to implement the necessary structural changes means that the IMF should be very wary indeed of relaxing its conditionality." Officials in the Clinton administration echoed this thinly veiled threat.

Another wave of currency devaluations hit the region January 7 with the baht, the Malaysian ringgit, the Philippine peso, and the Indonesian rupiah falling to record lows against the U.S. dollar. These currencies have plummeted 50 or 60 percent in six months, making it difficult to pay back loans in dollars, yen, and other imperialist currencies.

Some 20 percent of the total domestic loans in Asia are estimated to be "nonperforming" — that is they are not being paid on time. This figure is expected to rise to at least 30 percent of the total loans in China, south Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia.

South Korean conglomerates have been



Asian governments' attempts to push austerity measures will spark working-class resistance. Above, workers in south Korea protest threat of mass firings last year.

collapsing under the weight of massive debts. The French firm Credit Lyonnais Securities estimated that just 87 south Korean nonfinancial enterprises, or 13 percent of those listed on the stock exchange, are relatively safe from bankruptcy.

Debt crisis mounts in south Korea

Fearing a default on the international debt of the government and major companies, south Korean officials negotiated a \$57 billion loan program with the IMF. But this hasn't been enough to stabilize the economy. On December 29 several of the world's largest banks, fearing a wave of defaults throughout the region, gave borrowers in south Korea a one-month reprieve on loan payments of up to \$15 billion that were due by the end of 1997. The agreement was reached after a week of negotiations among government officials and bankers in the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Switzerland. Seoul had announced in December that its foreign debt was some \$153 billion; banking officials said about \$40 billion of that was short-term debt due by March 31.

"If it got to a [debt repayment] moratorium in Korea, that likely would have spread to Indonesia and Thailand with a knock-on effect elsewhere," asserted one U.S. banker involved in the negotiations. "The idea was to try and stop this at Korea."

Of the \$103.4 billion in outstanding loans to south Korean enterprises as of June 30, capitalist investors in Japan held \$23.7 billion, those in the United States owned \$9.96 billion, tycoons in France held \$10.07 billion, and those in Germany owned \$10.8 billion.

"The only reason the banks are rolling over the short-term debt is because they know if they call it, the loans will default," asserted David Durrant, an analyst with an advisory firm in New York. "They're bailing themselves out first because they have nowhere to go."

The credit squeeze in south Korea is so tight that an average of 45 companies a day declared bankruptcy in December. More than 100 companies were reportedly threatened with possible bankruptcy if unable to meet \$1.5 billion in bond payments by December 31. Meanwhile, some \$20 billion in capital has left the country.

More than 15,000 companies collapsed in 1997 and some 1.3 million people in south Korea could become jobless as a result of the austerity "reforms" pushed by the IMF as a condition of its "bailout." In November alone 100,000 people lost their jobs there. And while an unemployment-insurance fund does exist, fewer than 1 percent of jobless workers received benefits. Hanbo, the

country's second-largest steelmaker, had laid off 8,000 of the 10,000 employees at its mill in Tangjin by November last year. Although most of the plant is shut down, company officials say the mill will try to produce 2 million tons of steel in 1998, down from its original projection of 5 million tons.

Seoul's agreement with international bankers will not be enough to resolve the country's financial crisis, so a team of government officials met with U.S. and foreign bankers at J.P. Morgan & Co. January 5 to push for \$35 billion in new loans. According to news reports, the government plans to issue \$30 billion in long-term bonds to replace some of the short-term debt that must be paid at the end of January.

Since the credit rating of south Korea was reduced to "junk" status December 22, the government will be forced to raise interest rates, which makes these bonds more expensive to issue. It also makes borrowing by local enterprises more costly, which could trigger another wave of bankruptcies and defaults.

The south Korean delegation was dispatched by Kim Yong Hwan, who is the chief economic policy maker for the incoming government of president-elect Kim Dae Jung. Kim Yong Hwan, a former military official and finance minister, is also head of an emergency economic committee created by the president-elect. He is a senior member of the party that organized a 1961 coup, which established nearly three decades of military dictatorships.

Almost every week the big-business media expresses concerns about impending mass protests. "Politicians are afraid to act for fear of alienating the country's labor unions and sparking mass social unrest," the *Wall Street Journal* reported December 31.

The government executed 23 death-row inmates December 30, the first use of capital punishment in two years.

A three-week nationwide strike in January 1997 delayed for two years the implementation of a layoff clause in an antiunion bill passed by the National Assembly. Hundreds of thousands of workers mobilized to demand the repeal of the measures that made it easier for bosses to fire them.

Layoffs will lead to labor struggles

"Korean companies are looking ripe for foreign buyers," ran the December 27 front page headline in the *New York Times*. Three days later, the south Korean National Assembly approved measures to expedite foreign investment and the buyout of the national patrimony by imperialist investors. The lawmakers, however, balked once again at trying to hasten the labor "reforms" demanded by Washington and the IMF, and

did not establish procedures for dismissing workers at financial institutions that are put up for sale.

Some 300 workers rallied in front of the parliament building December 29 to protest the legislation, and another demonstration was organized the same day in front of the headquarters of the National Congress for New Politics, the party of Kim Dae Jung.

"We workers are deeply disappointed and feel betrayed by President-elect Kim Dae Jung," said one protester at the rally.

About one week later, Kim announced January 5 that he aimed to speed up laws permitting job cuts at failing financial institutions.

The Finance and Economy Ministry had announced plans January 2 to take over Korea First Bank and Seoul Bank and sell it to foreign investors. The banks are the country's two largest insolvent commercial banks. Korea First has an estimated \$2.67 billion in unrecoverable debt and Seoul Bank held \$2.14 billion. The U.S. banking giants Citibank and Chase Manhattan have expressed interest in investing in the banks, according to the south Korean news media.

The Halla Group said December 31 that it may sell its entire paper business to the U.S. company Bowater, Inc. Halla, south Korea's 12th-largest conglomerate, declared bankruptcy in early December.

Deflationary pressures stemming from the economic crisis sweeping across the Pacific have put a crimp on the profits of some U.S. companies. For example, prices have dropped in the steel industry. In September hot-rolled steel sheets sold for \$340 a ton. They fetched \$320 in October and \$300 in November. According to *Barrons*, U.S. steel bosses are nervous that south Korean-based Pohang Iron & Steel Co., the second-largest producer of steel in the world, will undercut their products because of the currency devaluation.

Bosses at The Boeing Co. are having nightmares that some orders may be canceled if the currency turmoil deepens. Nearly one-third of the company's backlog of orders are from Asian airlines. The Thai Air Force is seeking to delay purchase of eight Boeing F/A-18 warplanes worth \$392 million. The government decided against scrapping the deal altogether because of a \$250 million "termination penalty" demanded by U.S. aerospace giant.

The drop in value of the south Korean won has stiffened pressures on the Big Three U.S. automakers, making their imports more expensive to purchase. Last month, Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors sold a total of 268 vehicles in south Korea, their worst sales in a year.

Meanwhile, with a stagnant domestic market and a weak yen, "Japanese carmakers are expected to focus on the U.S. and European markets," to boost their profits, the *Financial Times* reported January 6.

Nationalist debate over IMF funds

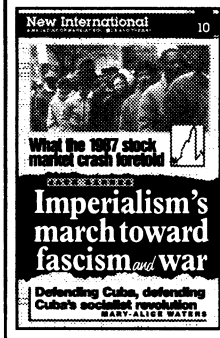
Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan continues to seize on the economic crisis in Asia to push his demagogic, nationalist appeal in defense of "American workers." In a syndicated column published December 31, he asked, "How can a White House that just OK'd \$125 billion in U.S. tax dollars and IMF bailout money to protect Korean banks and Wall Street investors deny protection to American workers?" Buchanan declared, "A clamor for protection is going to hit Congress."

Economic nationalism is also the theme of the debate unfolding in the U.S. Congress over proposed additional funding to the IMF. Rep. Lauch Faircloth, a right-wing Republican, has reportedly teamed with the social democrat Rep. Bernard Sanders to oppose the Clinton administration's requests for extra IMF funds. Sanders hinted he would vote for the IMF funding if the imperialist financial institution agrees to provisions that supposedly includes "workers' rights provisions" in its "rescue" programs.

FROM PATHFINDER

In New International no. 10

- ◆ Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War by Jack Barnes
- ◆ What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold
- ◆ Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution by Mary-Alice Waters
- ◆ The Curve of Capitalist Development by Leon Trotsky \$14.00



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.